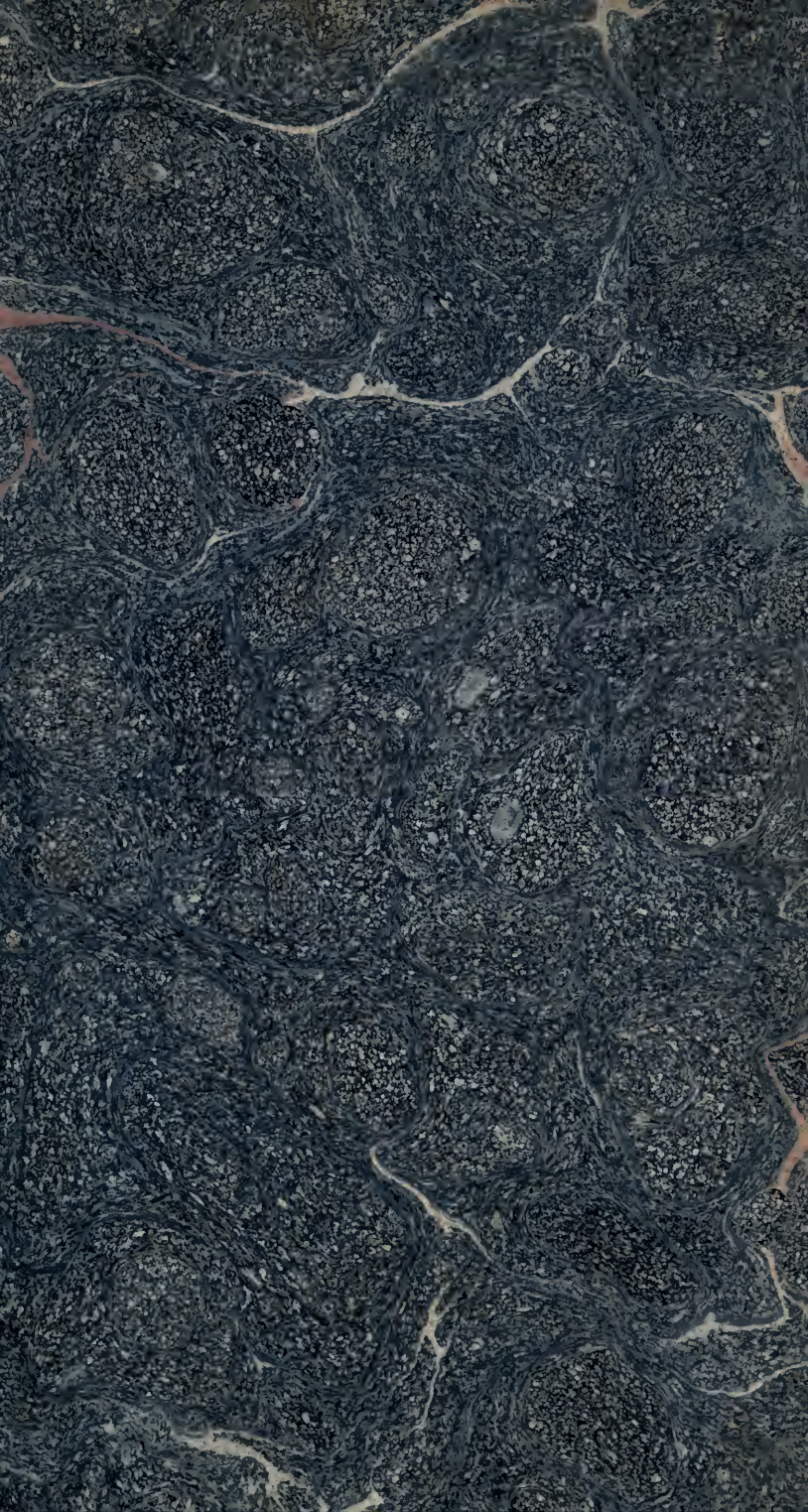






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BY HENRY CARD, A. M.

OF PEMBROKE COLLEGE, OXFORD.

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1809.

TO

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THOMAS CHARLES CADOGAN, Esq.

WITH A DEEP RESPECT FOR HIS VIRTUES,

THIS WORK IS INSCRIBED,

BY HIS MOST SINCERE,

AND MOST OBLIGED FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

CHAPEL HILL, MARGATE,
JUNE 6, 1809.

1575650

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHYSICS DEPARTMENT

RESEARCH REPORT

NO. 1234

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UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

LITERARY
RECREATIONS.

ESSAY I.

Of the Origin of Eulogies.

THE love of praise is so generally prevalent, that without fear of contradiction, it may be regarded as a common principle, inherent in human nature, because it seems inseparable from self-love. This passion, has rendered some men as conspicuous for their crimes, as it has others, for their virtues. It has produced princes and generals, who have done the work of demons, in order to obtain the name of heroes; and it has also given birth to the systems of the legislator, and to the eloquence of the orator. Fools and flatterers have not been wanting to con-

found those two classes of men. But their panegyrics may be said to resemble the statues erected by the Romans to their emperors; most of which were broken to pieces, when the object of them ceased to exist. Death, does, indeed, make as much havoc with the reputation of the former class, as they did with their swords, when living, among their fellow creatures. Fear and interest, being no longer constrained to pour forth their eulogies, their memories are consigned at once to the vengeance of posterity. How differently does death operate upon the characters of the benefactors of mankind? The voice of envy is then heard no more against them; and immortality commences.* That such is the immutable distinction established by the fiat of ages, between these classes of men, cannot escape the observation of those, who have been accustomed to survey the history of the world with an attentive eye.

The origin of eulogies, prior, as they unquestionably were, to civil institutions, may yet form

* Urit enim fulgere suo qui prægravat artes,
Infra se positas; extinctus amabatur idem.

Horace, Epist. I. Lib. II.

the subject of an entertaining and instructive essay; for the desire of knowing what has happened in ages, when the use of arts and letters was unknown, can never be coupled with absurdity and ridicule, so long as it is attended with the beneficial consequence of enabling us to appreciate more fully the blessings of civilization.

To the first hymns addressed to the Deity, we may safely ascribe the origin of eulogies. These hymns were inspired by admiration and gratitude. Man, in his primæval state, on contemplating the magnificent canopy of Heaven, the boundless immensity of the waters, the deep gloom of the forests, the endless variety and richness of the fields, and the innumerable multitude of beings, destined to ornament the globe which he inhabited, must have been impressed with the feelings of admiration and delight. To these, another sentiment would necessarily succeed. When the transports of wonder had subsided at this august spectacle, he could not fail to discover that he was not the author of it, but that it was the work of an all-wise, all-powerful, and all benevolent Being. Possessed of this

religious idea, he must then have joined his voice to that of nature, and sung forth, with the most lively sensations of gratitude, his praises, who enabled him to perceive, and feel, the incomparable beauty of the universe.

The first hymn chanted in this solitude of the world, observes an eloquent and profound writer,* was a great epoch for the human race. Soon after that event, parents, we may suppose, assembled their children in the fields, to offer up the same homage. Then did the aged sire, holding a blade of corn in one hand, and, with the other, pointing to the earth, sea, and skies, instruct his family to sound the praises of the God who nourished them.

These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
 Almighty! thine this universal frame,
 Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous, then?
 Unspeakable; who sit'st above the heav'ns,
 To us invisible, or dimly seen,
 In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
 Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.

Paradise Lost, Book V.

* See the beautiful "Essai sur les Eloges," by M. Thomas.

In this reign of nature, thanksgivings were likewise repeated at the rising and the setting of the sun, the renewal of the year, the commencement of a season, and the appearance of a new moon. In ages more advanced into a state of regular policy, we discover the constant practice of addressing the gods upon all occasions of happiness, or misery. When battles were fought, and won, or when pestilence and famine visited them, the people equally crowded the temple, to celebrate the praises of the deities they adored.

In those hymns, which were sung in that country where Homer poured forth his immortal lines, and Orpheus instituted his mysteries, and which are still left entire to us, it is easy to discover passages of great sublimity, disfigured as they are by the idle tales of the poets and painters. The hymns attributed to Homer, partake of the grandeur and beauty of his poetry; yet may rather be regarded as monuments of ancient mythology, than of religious eulogies. Tradition has handed down to us, the unrivalled fame which Pindar obtained for his hymns to Jupiter, his pæans to Apollo, and lofty

dithyrambics* to Bacchus. But the hand of time has not spared one of those performances; all that can now be safely affirmed of them is, that they were consecrated to the Delphian Apollo, whose oracles equally laid under contribution, the credulity of the people, and the ambition of the kings. It may, however, be reasonably doubted, whether even the name of Pindar could have soared to an higher pitch of sublimity, than is to be found in the following hymn of Cleanthes. Animated by his divine subject, he thus breaks forth in strains worthy, in every respect, of the father of the stoics.†

“ O thou, who, under several names art adored, but whose power is entire and infinite, O Jupiter, first of immortals, sovereign of nature, governor of all, and supreme legislator of all things, accept my

* *Laurea donandus Apollinari,
Seu per audaces nova dithyrambos
Verba devolvit, numerisque fertur,
Lege solutis;
Seu Deos, regesque canit, Deorum,
Sanguinem,*

Horace Lib. IV. Ode II.

† The appellation given him by Cicero, although he was the disciple and successor of Zeno, the founder of the Portico.

suppliant prayer, for to man is given the right to invoke thee. Whatever lives and moves on this earth, drew its being from thee; we are a faint similitude of thy divinity. I will address, then, my hymns unto thee, and never will I cease to praise thy wondrous power. That universe, suspended over our heads, and which seems to roll around the earth, obeys thee; it moves along, and silently submits to thy mandate. The thunder, ministers of thy laws, rests under thy invincible hands, flaming, gifted with an immortal life, it strikes, and all nature is terrified. Thou directest the universal spirit, which animates all things, and lives in all beings. Such, O Almighty King, is thy unbounded sway. In heaven, on earth, or in the floods below, there is nought performed, or produced, without thee, except the evil, which came from the heart of the wicked.* By thee, confusion is changed

* Οὐδέ τι γιγνεται, ἔργον ἐπι χθονί σδὺ δίχα, δαῖμον,
 Οὔτε κατ' αἰ θερῖον θεῖον πολον, οὔτ' ἐνί ποντω .
 Πλὴν ὅποσα ρεζουσι κακῶι σφετερησιν ανοιαις.

Lines 15, 17.

How similar is this sentiment to that expression of the Apostle St. James. "Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man."

Epist. Chap. i. ver. 13.

into order: by thee, the warring elements are united. By an happy agreement, thou so blendest good with evil, as to produce a general and eternal harmony in all things. But man, wicked man, alone, breaks this great harmony of the world. Wretched being, who seeks after good, and yet perceives not the universal law which points out the way to render him at once good and happy. He abandons the pursuit of virtue and justice, and roves where each passion moves him. Sordid wealth, fame, and sensual pleasures, become, by turns, the objects of his pursuit. O God, from whom all gifts descend, who sittest in thick darkness,* thunder ruling Lord; dispel this ignorance from the mind of man; deign to enlighten his soul; draw it to that eternal reason which serves as thy guide, and support, in the government of the world. So that, honoured with a portion of this light, we may, in our turn, be able to honour thee, by celebrating thy great works unceasingly, in a

* *Ἄλλα Ζεῦ πανδωρε, κελαινεφες, αρχικεραυνε.*—Line 32. “He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters, and thick clouds of the skies.”—Psalm xviii. v. 11. The hymn of Cleanthes is preserved by Stobæus.

hymn. This is the proper duty of man. For, surely, nothing can be more delightful to the inhabitants of the earth, or the skies, than to celebrate that divine reason which presides over nature."

Among the Roman poets, Ovid addressed a hymn to Bacchus, Virgil one to Hercules, and Horace has given us several, which discovers that grace and harmony of versification, of which he was confessedly so great a master. But the above ode of Cleantes is entitled, however, to a decided preference over them all, not only from the superior sublimity of its thoughts, but from the inimitable grandeur of its expressions.*

Eulogies were not, however, long confined to the Deity, but descended soon to man. They began in truth, but have ended in adulation. They celebrated benefits, before they flattered power, and honoured

* It may not be amiss here to observe, that our reason for making no mention of the sacred hymns and songs addressed by the Hebrews to the Deity, arises from respect, and the persuasion, that it would be highly improper to pass any criticism upon performances which breathe so divine a spirit of eloquence.

crimes. The reason of this proceeding is obvious. In rude ages, man stood fierce, and independent. In the equality of rights, which then existed, to receive praise, was to merit it. The chief, or rather the sole, ground of distinction, being personal qualities, he who performed, therefore, the most useful services, was sure to be the most admired and respected.

The discovery of fire, the application of this element to the usages of life, the art of forging metals, and the rude design of a plough, were doubtless the first titles for the panegyrics of nations. The meanest professions were then the noblest. After these discoverers of materials adapted to the purposes of life had received their due praises, the next persons to whom, we may suppose, the palm of distinction and honour was assigned, were those who voluntarily encountered lions and tigers, and other destructive animals, to ensure the safety and preservation of their fellow creatures. The legislator may be conjectured to have been the last, in this infant state of society, who was exalted to a place among the benefactors of mankind.

The existence, indeed, of eulogies, among the earliest ages of the world, can be readily traced by every writer, who has applied himself to the study of general history. The Chinese, Phœnicians, and Arabians, celebrated in songs the great exploits of their heroes. Greece could not be recognised as the country of Homer and Plato, when she adopted or created this usage. The same custom was practised among the Romans, when the blood of a horse, the husk of a bean, the ashes of the bowels of a calf killed in the belly of its mother, and burnt on the altar of Vesta, were deemed sufficient to purify their nation.*

In short, the same institution prevailed for several centuries among the Celtic people. The Druids were the philosophers and priests of the nation; the Bards were the panegyrists of heroes. Their station was the centre of the army; and the warrior, who fell, covered with a hundred blows, turned his dying eyes toward the poet, who was to raise him to a state of immortality. These songs or eulogies constituted the chief ambition of that nation. The

* See Ovid Fasti. Lib. IV,

memory of those songs passed to succeeding generations. They served as the prelude to battles; they animated the warrior; they consoled the aged. The hero, who could no longer wield the javelin, seated himself under an oak, and listened with delight to the bard, who rehearsed the glorious deeds of his youth; while his sons, who surrounded him, leaned upon their lances, and sighed to think how distant was the period before they should equal his renown.

The enthusiasm of valour, which these panegyrics tended to call forth among this people, can be more easily conceived than described. Such, indeed, were the effects of those military songs; that we may almost be justified in comparing them to the Roman triumphs, which, by exhibiting symbols of the cities, rivers, and mountains, the general had visited in the course of his victorious career, exposed to the eyes of the citizens the magnitude of his conquest; and never failed to excite in them expressions the most conducive to the permanent glory of their country. By means of these songs, Germany, Gaul, and England, maintained so long

a struggle against the Roman power; and they imparted to the north of Scotland a sentiment of liberty and independence, which is not even yet entirely extinguished. Before Edward the First could subdue the Welsh, he was obliged to have recourse to the cruel expedient of massacring their bards. But, though he put them to the sword, he could not destroy those songs which perpetuated, in their mountains, a contempt of death, and an abhorrence of slavery.

The Germans, like the Scots and Britains, had their bards, who, in the field of battle, and the feast of victory, animated their auditors to imitate the illustrious exploits of their fore-fathers. Several of their songs existed in the time of Charlemagne, who ordered them to be translated into verse, in the language of the ancient *Romantz*. These monuments were preserved, so long as this great prince lived; but they were swept away in the deluge of barbarism which followed his death. An historian, however, who wrote in the commencement of the sixteenth century, quotes these ancient songs, and pretends to have discovered them in some convent

of Germany ; but, whoever has examined the general nature of the events recorded in his work, will not be inclined, perhaps, to give implicit belief to this interesting assertion.*

If we ascend from Germany towards the north, among the Scandinavians, we shall find the same usage existing. The people, who reduced the mistress of the world, had a subject to celebrate, powerfully adapted to kindle enthusiasm and valour in their ferocious breasts. The Scaldi sung the glories of their heroes ; and, it is said, that the Runic characters are still to be traced on the rocks of the north. The Danes, who, under the famous name of Normans, spread devastation over the largest and finest part of Europe, never failed to be accompanied, on their piratical expeditions, by a number of Scaldi, or poets, selected for the express purpose of recording their exploits.

The same usage prevailed in America, as we have already shewn, existed in ancient Europe. In Mexico, Peru, Brazil, and Canada, poets have appeared

* See the Chronicon of Albert Krantzius.

to celebrate different sorts of great men. Thus, by a very natural order of things, it seems, that public interest laid the foundation of eulogies. Each nation considered that as most praise-worthy, which most administered to its wants and pleasures. Piracy was, therefore, the theme of universal applause among the Scandinavians, plunder among the Huns, fanaticism among the Arabs, the benevolent and useful virtues among civilized people, hunting and fishing among savages, and navigation among the inhabitants of islands.

Having now briefly surveyed the origin of eulogies, of almost every nation of the earth, it will not be widely deviating from the subject of this essay, to close it with paying a tribute of admiration to that practice, observed for so many centuries in Egypt, preparatory to the interment of her people and chief magistrates; and, which no nation, ancient or modern, has ever dared to imitate, although it was so pregnant of real good and greatness. We are informed, by that eminent Greek historian, Diodorus Siculus, that a tribunal was erected among the Egyptians, where subjects, and princes themselves,

were judged, and condemned or acquitted, after their deaths; where the memories of the wicked citizen and courtier, and profligate tyrant, who had escaped the punishment due to their numerous crimes, were delivered up to eternal infamy; and where the fathers of their people, and all, whose labours had tended to promote the public good, and private happiness, received those panegyrics and honours which had been withheld from them when living.* What an edifying and imposing situation! How powerfully calculated to interest the best affections of the mind; and how worthy of that country, which was the cradle of arts, sciences, and mysteries, the school of Orpheus and Homer, Pythagoras and Plato, Solon and Lycurgus. To such an institution we may, with the strictest propriety,

* Although some critics refuse their assent to the general opinion of the Sixth Book of the *Æneid* being the most perfect of the whole, in point of sublime invention, beauty of imagery, majesty of sentiment, and harmony of versification, yet they will not assuredly deny, that, from one end of it to the other, we may discover the strokes of the master. Those passages, especially, interest our moral feelings, where, under the just empire of Minos, the poet displays his eloquence, in describing the punishments of wickedness, the happiness of the patriot who died for his country, and the misery of the tyrant who oppressed it.

apply those emphatic words of the Roman Historian, "Præcipuum munus annalium reor, ne virtutes sileantur; utque pravis dictis factisque ex posteritate et infamiâ metus sit."*

* Tacitus, Lib. III. Cap. LXV.

ESSAY II.

*On some particular Injunctions and Actions in the
New Testament.*

IT is the opinion of many good Christians, that, as the clergy are allowed so short a time in every year to instruct their fellow-creatures from the pulpit, their discourses ought, therefore, to be chiefly or solely employed upon practical subjects; in shewing what our religion prohibits, and what it enjoins us to do, in this world, in order that we may be received to immortality, in that which is to come. Yet those who may entirely subscribe to this opinion, will not, however, consider it as an impertinent interference with the concerns of the clerical profession, if we devote an Essay to the interpretation of some particular injunctions and actions of our Lord; which, at the first glance,

have even staggered the minds of the truly pious, and have excited doubts altogether of the divine authority of the Christian dispensation, in many thousands, whom ignorance or inattention* has led to obtain but a scanty and imperfect knowledge of it. To learned men, the passages we shall select for explanation, will, doubtless, seem to be of little difficulty, and, perhaps, of no very high importance. But as this volume will, it is to be hoped, fall into other hands than those who have studied the faith so profoundly, we may be allowed, without the imputation of vanity; to think, that it may be in our power satisfactorily to answer some objections of those, who have not been accustomed to make religion alone their rule of life.

Upon the following passages, then, we shall venture to make a few comments.

“ So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. And he said unto them, Go.” *Matt. viii. 31, 32.*

The enemies of the Christian faith, with a malignant and illiberal exultation, have maintained the destruction of the herd of swine to be one of those miracles wrought by our Saviour, which, so far from advancing any moral purpose, was an act pregnant with the most evil and mischievous consequences. And, in support of this assertion, they have brought forward every specious argument, which their sophistry could supply. But those who have pursued their enquiries respecting the miracles of our blessed Lord with more candour and impartiality, and, we will venture to add, with more erudition, can as clearly perceive the laws of justice, and the obligations of morality, to be strictly regarded, in his sending the devils into a herd of swine, as in any other miracle which he performed, to confirm his claims to a divine commission. In their well-meaning zeal to vindicate Jesus from even being supposed as the author of the mischief here done, some Divines have strongly contended, that our Saviour did not command, but only suffered, the devils, at their own request, to take possession of the swine. But the expression, Go, implies, in our opinion, something more than a bare permis-

sion ; and, for giving this command, we are inclined to think these, among many other reasons, may be satisfactorily alledged.

Without entering into a discussion respecting the extent of power which evil spirits had, to actuate the minds of men, during the age in which our Saviour* appeared upon earth, it is well known, that the Jews ascribed his power of casting out devils, to Beelzebub, the prince of devils. To satisfy, then, the most suspicious, that his controul over the possessed was derived only from the divine will, he sent the devils, which he had ejected out of a poor man, into a herd of swine ; and, by that act, made it equally obvious to the learned and ignorant, that, whatever compact might exist between him and the demoniacs, he could have none with the swine. Our Lord might, also, intend to

* We could easily quote many expressions of the Apostles, to prove the mighty influence which the Devil, "the God of this world," as St. Paul styles him, *2 Corinthians iv. 4*, possessed in the affairs of men. But it will be sufficient to shew his power in that respect, if we only call to remembrance the injunctions which our Lord gave to his disciples, to supplicate God to deliver them, *απο τῆς πονηρίας*, from the evil one.

shew, by this miracle, the great malice and power of the devils, and the multitude of them that possessed the one or two persons; since, on their expulsion, they were sufficient to actuate the bodies of a herd of swine, which St. Mark affirms to have consisted of no smaller number than two thousand. By a miracle like this, addressed so completely to the testimony of the senses, the most prejudiced must likewise have been sensible of the great deliverance given to those two tormented persons.

It is the opinion of Grotius, he wrought this miracle to convince the Greeks, who lived in Gadara, and kept the herd of swine, that the laws of the Jews were too sacred to be ridiculed, with impunity, by them, as they did, upon account of their prohibition to eat swine's flesh. How far this opinion is entitled to general reception, we shall not presume to determine. But those who may be disposed to cavil at it, will surely admit, that the destruction of the herd of swine was a just punishment upon those to whom the beasts belonged, since, by their soliciting Jesus, immediately afterwards, to depart from their coasts, it is very evi-

dent, that they preferred their swine before their souls. Yet either of the foregoing explanations; we should hope, are quite adequate to refute any objections to this miracle, on the score of its unsuitableness to any good purpose; and of its being repugnant to every principle of humanity and justice.

“ Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” *Matthew* xii. 31, 32.

According to their peculiar tenets, have divines interpreted the meaning of that sin, which is emphatically styled *the sin against the Holy Ghost*. But, as their learning, like their intentions, are very different, we shall avoid much useless discussion, by briefly collecting the sentiments of the most

sagacious and orthodox theologians upon this disputed point. When the three Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, so explicitly concur in representing the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, as irremissible, “*ὅτι ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι, ὅτι ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι,*” it is surprising to us that so skilful a commentator as Grotius should attempt to soften the severity of this sentence, by saying, that what is absolutely spoken by our Lord, must be comparatively understood, and only implies the extreme difficulty, though not the absolute impossibility of obtaining the pardon of this sin.

It may be observed, that, at the time that Jesus declares all hope of forgiveness is excluded to him who vilifies and blasphemes the Holy Ghost, yet a free pardon is assured to him who speaketh against the Son of man; that is, who shall style him a wine-bibber, a glutton, an impostor, and shall impute his miracles to the agency of an infernal spirit. Now it is evident, that this heinous offence could not be committed during the actual ministry of Christ; because the Holy Ghost was not to be sent till after his glorious resurrection, and ascension into

Heaven. When the descent of the Holy Ghost communicated to the disciples of our Lord, the same stupendous powers he had possessed, to revile that extraordinary gift became, therefore, a sin of the most unpardonable nature, because this was the completion of the evidence of his divine mission and character. Thus it appears, that the sin against the Holy Ghost lay in totally resisting and finally rejecting the Gospel, as preached by the Apostles, who supported and established their commission "by signs and wonders, and divers miracles of the Holy Ghost." For those who had witnessed, then, their nature, greatness, and number, still to persist in denying Christ to be the Messiah, was a sin in them obviously distinct from all their other sins. Because, after those last infallible and decisive tests of divine interposition, it evinced a most incurable wickedness and perverseness of mind, a most unconquerable and impious aversion, to refuse "being brought to faith in Christ."

"But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. *Matthew* xii, 36.—By strain-

ing the sense of this declaration of Jesus, commentators lose all sight of those qualities of compassion and love for the welfare of mankind, which so eminently distinguished his doctrines. "My yoke is easy, and my burthen is light," is the benevolent and consoling expression of our Divine Master. Now, surely, to interpret literally the above declaration, must produce no other effect than that of exciting horror and disgust towards the Christian religion, in the minds of the dissolute, but enlightened; and of infusing scruples even among those who are the least in danger of imbibing the poison of infidelity. From the manner, indeed, in which some have expounded this declaration, we might even be led to infer, that it is sinful to talk of news, rain, weather, or any of those indifferent matters, which cannot be said to do either harm or good. To such trifles, then, this awful menace of our Lord was certainly not intended to apply.

The proper explanation of the subject we take to be this:—That men should give an account, at the day of judgment, of all the wicked and impious words which they have spoken; and that the Pha-

risees especially should be answerable to God for the blasphemies which they uttered against his miracles. There is a passage of Plato, in his Treatise de Fato, where he observes, “Grievous is the damage of light and frivolous words.” Now, by *νεφων, κει, πτενον λογων*, the philosopher evidently means words spoken against parents, or the defamation of persons to whom a due reverence ought to be paid. The *παν βημικα αργον* can admit, then, of no other meaning, than wicked, impious, scandalous, or false words. Upon the same ground, therefore, that we object to the literal interpretation of the above passage, we must, likewise, enter our protest against those who consider that the word *fool*, in the following sentence, is to be received according to the modern acceptation of that word. “But whosoever shall say, unto his brother, *thou fool!* shall be in danger of hell fire. *Matthew* v. 22.—Since the word *fool*, here, plainly signifies a profane and wicked person, as is shewn in the Psalms: “The fool has said in his heart, there is no God.” “Arise, O God, maintain thine own cause; remember how the foolish man blasphemeth thee daily.”

“ For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. *Matthew* xii. 40.—The historical, as well as the moral part of the New Testament, has been alike exposed to the impotent attacks of the flagitious. But, surely, those who raise objections against the truth of these words, must be ignorant that the Jews used the phrase, three days and three nights, to denote what we understand by three days: “ I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights.” *Genesis* vii. 4.—“ That Egyptian did eat no bread, nor drink water, three days and three nights.” *1 Samuel* xxx. 12.—“ Moses was in the Mount forty days and forty nights.” *Exodus* xxiv. 18.—Instead, then, of saying three days and three nights, let us simply say three days, and we think there will be no more seeming defectiveness of the fact of Christ being three days, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, in the heart of the earth. We are not, however, to be understood as saying, that he was in the grave the whole of either Friday or Sunday. But Dr. Lightfoot and Grotius tell us, that it was a received

rall among the Jews, that part of the day was put for the whole; so that, according to their computation, he might be truly said to have been in the grave three days and three nights.

“The son of man goeth, as it is written of him, but wo to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed; it had been good for that man, if he had not been born.” *Matthew* xxvi. 24.—Few passages in the Gospel have produced a more infinite variety of opinions than this one. Some have thought it incumbent upon them to believe, that Judas was created for no other purpose but to betray the Son of God, or, in other words, that it was absolutely decreed, by the will of our Heavenly Father, he should be as one of those vessels that were made to wrath, before the foundations of the world were laid. But they who refuse their assent to this doctrine of absolute election and reprobation, have, nevertheless, not dissembled the difficulty of reconciling this prediction of our Lord, with the common notions of divine mercy and justice. It appears to us, that we should entertain a very erroneous idea of the divine œconomy, in supposing

that an antecedent necessity was imposed upon Judas, of betraying Christ, in consequence of his having foretold that event. For we cannot listen with patience to the opinion, that a Being, as wise and benevolent as he is omnipotent, should arbitrarily select one portion of the human race for eternal happiness, and consign the other to eternal misery.

To reconcile, then, the above declaration with the great fundamental doctrine of Scripture, that the Son of man descended from Heaven to redeem all mankind, we must deny, entirely, all partial providence in God, and believe that he equally enabled Judas, as any other man born into the world, to work out his salvation: but that, by his prescience, he foresaw he would not be obedient to his laws. Upon no account, therefore, are we to conclude, that, because Judas betrayed his Master, he had less free will than any other individual of the human race. Nor are we, likewise, to view the appointment of Judas to the apostleship as incompatible with that pre-eminent wisdom which characterised all the actions of our blessed Lord.

Since, long before any intention was manifested by Judas to betray him, Jesus fully exposed his real character to the rest of his disciples, in these words: "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil." *John* vi. 70.—That is, one whose conduct is actuated by the most base and inordinate passions.

It has been, also, absurdly urged by the adversaries of our holy faith, that Judas was induced to betray his Master, in consequence of having discovered that he was an impostor. Or else, say they, the consideration of his power and knowledge, as the Son of God, would have terrified him from doing it. But this futile objection is at once refuted, by the contrition which he afterwards expressed to the chief priests and elders. "I have sinned," was his confession to them, "in betraying innocent blood." The true motive, then, which instigated Judas to that act of perfidy, we take to be the following:—The Jewish nation, it is well known, expected to see, in the person of their promised deliverer, a powerful king, who should liberate them from the galling yoke of the Romans; and this opi-

nion was not confined to the rulers of the Jews, but was as readily embraced by the disciples of our Lord. So rooted, indeed, was this belief among them, that we even see, not all the repeated avowals of Jesus to the contrary, could erase it from their minds. To the impatience of Judas to participate in the temporal honors and emoluments of his Master's kingdom, we must solely ascribe his subsequent perfidy of conduct. For so far does he seem to be carried away by the popular prepossessions respecting the character and office of the Messiah, that, he did not doubt, upon his delivering Jesus into the hands of the Sanhedrim, that he would immediately assume the ensigns of temporal dominion, and reward his adherents with an abundance of riches, the expectation of which had first led him to become one of his followers, for he was of a disposition so covetous, we find, as to steal money out of the common bag. The disappointment, then, of obtaining an object, which lay so near his heart, together with the remorse which he really felt at bringing his Master to an ignominious death, concurred, we may also suppose, in urging him to put an end to his own existence.

“ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama Sabacthani; that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.” *Matthew* xxvii. 46. — Various solutions have been given of this tragic exclamation. We shall select those which appear to us most entitled to notice, and leave our readers to draw their own conclusions. It has pleased the enemies of Christianity to insinuate, that the divine founder of it, by the despondency which he shewed in the garden of Gethsemane, on the approach of his trial and death, and the words, which he uttered upon the cross, evinced a want of manly fortitude, little calculated to support the truth of those doctrines, which he preached. In reply to these invidious remarks, many learned men contend, that it was not the fear of crucifixion, which so far overcame Jesus, as to throw him into an agony and bloody sweat, but his distress in the garden proceeded from the lively sense which he, at that time, had of the miseries of mankind, produced by sin; and when he cried out, “ My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me,” his anguish arose from the inconceivable pains which were inflicted on him by the hand

of God, on his making his soul an offering for sin. Others, also, labour to prove, that the difficulty of solving that expression, is occasioned from our confounding the *Hypostatic union*, or else we should have perceived that the divine was, at that moment, so much lost or absorbed in his human nature, as to make him feel a withdrawing of those comforts, which hitherto had always filled his soul, although it is extremely difficult for us to conceive in what that agony consisted.

But, perhaps, the Evangelists themselves will afford us a more clear idea of this subject, for, in many, instances, we shall find that they are our best commentators. From them we learn, that the salvation of mankind was the momentous end for which Jesus came into the world; or, according to the scriptural phrase, “to give his life as a ransom for many.” Upon this account, therefore, his sorrows, observes a writer of equal piety and judgment, “were such as no other person in this life ever felt. They arose from causes altogether singular, and from circumstances peculiar to himself. Being of this sort, they were no greater than the cause me-

rited, and the expressions by which he uttered them, are no argument of his pusillanimity or weakness. They were suitable to his feelings, and expressed them as far as it was possible to make them known. For it was agreeable to the councils of God, and for the benefit of men, that the sorrows which the Son of God felt in that hour, should be laid open to the view of the world.”*

“ And in the morning, as they passéd by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots. And Peter, calling to remembrance, said, Master, behold the fig-tree, which thou cursedst, is withered away.” *Mark xi. 20, 21.*—The cursing of the fig-tree, like the destruction of the herd of swine, has been represented, by the ill-wishers of Christianity, as conveying no moral lesson, and, in every respect, unbecoming the character of the divine teacher of mankind. In the first place, we must observe, to curse the land or trees in the Hebrew language, is simply to make or pronounce them unfruitful, as may be satisfactorily shewn in the fol-

* See the Truth of the Gospel History, by Macknight, Book I. Chap. IV.

lowing passage: "But which beareth thorns and briars is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned." *Hebrews* vi. 8.—The supposition, then, of those persons, that Jesus, in cursing the tree, uttered execrations against it, is as ill-founded as it is impious. But why he cursed the tree, that is, pronounced it unfruitful, was for the purpose of instructing the spectators of this miracle, that the Jews, a mere professing people, and who were just like that leaf-tree, without fruit, were to expect speedy destruction from him, if they persisted in their unfruitfulness.

This short elucidation, by Dr. Hammond, we prefer to the more elaborate ones of Whitby and other commentators.

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." *Luke* xiv. 26.—Every thing in our religion, has undoubtedly a reference to a future life. It is, therefore, the supreme concern of the pious believer, to please God in all his thoughts

and actions. But surely, if we were compelled to interpret literally this sentence, one would see just cause to object to the morality of the Gospel, and its suitableness as well as to the government of mankind, as to the exercise of the best affections of our nature. In those words, Jesus then could only be considered as saying, that, if you do not prefer me to those with whom you are bound in the dearest domestic ties, if my doctrines are not able to draw off your attention from the things of this world, and to affix them on those above, you must not hope to be ranked among the number of my disciples. Perhaps, also, as the High Priest was a type of our Lord, and he was to put off, according to Philo* the Jew, all natural affection for his father and mother, children, and brothers, if it interposed with the service of God, Jesus might have looked to that maxim, when he made the above declaration.

“Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee, mine hour is not yet come.” *John*

* See his *Treatise de Monarch*, P. 639.

ii. 4.—This answer is particularized by some, as inconsistent with that affectionate and dutiful respect, which divines affirm, was uniformly shewn by Jesus towards his parents. But it must proceed from a very ignorant interpretation of the word Woman, to infer that our Lord, by the use of it to his mother, was, therefore, deficient in filial respect and submission. For though that appellation now carries an aspect of coarseness and vulgarity, yet, in ancient times, it was applied to females the most illustrious in rank and descent, as may be proved in an hundred instances from the Greek writers. There is something, therefore, more plausible in the way which many apologize for Jesus calling his mother, Woman, when they say, that he thus addressed her, in order that she might remember certain passages which must impress her with sentiments of the highest reverence towards him, on account of his miraculous birth. Yet those who offer this explanation, do surely forget, that our Saviour used the above epithet in recommending his mother on the cross, with the utmost filial tenderness, to the care of his favourite disciple, "*Woman, behold thy son.*"

“And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-cloths, and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, loose him, and let him go.” *John xi. 44.*—Amid the many strokes which have been aimed against the invincible shield of Christianity, we are not surprised that those who have attempted to bring the historical part of it into discredit, should put this insulting question upon the resurrection of Lazarus: How could a man come out of his grave, who was bound hand and foot? That accurate and intelligent traveller, Maundrell,* will, perhaps, assist us, in a great measure, to illustrate this very important question. From him we learn, that the Jews did not, in general, make use of coffins in burying their dead, but placed the bodies in niches, cut into the sides of caves or rooms, hewn out of rocks. We are not, therefore, to understand St. John as saying that Lazarus walked out of the sepulchre, but that, extended on his back in a niche, he raised himself in a sitting posture, and then, putting his legs over

* See Description of the Sepulchre of the Kings, in his Travels, p. 76.

the edge of his niche or cell, slid down, and stood upright on the floor. Now, it is very clear, that this might be easily effected, notwithstanding his arms were pinioned, as it were, to his body, and his legs fastened together with the shroud and rollers. The order, therefore, which Jesus gave, for him to be unbound, very naturally followed the performance of this stupendous miracle.

“And when he had thus said, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” *John* xx. 22.—These words, at the first glance, have perplexed some, into whose minds the awful truths of the Gospel have deeply sunk. Our Lord, it is well known, always speaks of the Holy Ghost as not being to come till he had risen from the dead, and was exalted to the right hand of the Father. Yet, some days before that great event had taken place, he says to his disciples, “*Receive ye the Holy Ghost.*” This apparent difficulty may be thus reconciled. It is very evident, in the first place, that Christ was to bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost upon his disciples, not in the character of a prophet, but as the eternal Sovereign of the

Church. The reason, therefore, of his saying, in the present tense, Receive ye the Holy Ghost, must be taken in the prophetic style, as a thing they should soon receive, as certainly as he breathed upon them. In the same manner as he says, "This is my body, which is broken for you."—"This is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you."—"Now is the Son of man glorified."

We have now briefly touched upon those injunctions and actions of our Lord, to which such, whose hearts and minds are under the influence of prepossession and prejudice against the Scriptures, and such, whose religious doubts may be said to proceed from want of information, have equally raised objections. The true Christian, however, will not look upon the New Testament with less reverence, because he cannot understand all its contents. He knows that his life is a life of faith. To believe only, then, that which is inducible to his reason, he is aware, is not truth, but mere philosophy. He, therefore, deems it as foolish, as it is presumptuous, to disbelieve what he cannot account for, being perfectly satisfied, that what materially con-

cerns him to know, is so obvious and express, as can be misunderstood by none; namely, that, by the intervention of Jesus Christ, he, and all mankind, will obtain eternal happiness, if they love and obey him.

ESSAY III.

On the Difficulty of a Member of Parliament belonging to no Party.

FEW questions, perhaps, have been more agitated by the higher classes of politicians, than the possibility of a Member of Parliament maintaining so complete a state of independence, as to support or oppose no measure, but from principles the most impartial and conscientious. But, though this be one of those questions which can never be finally set at rest, until one uniform opinion shall prevail, respecting the nature and spirit of our constitution (the best, with all its defects, that was ever formed by human wisdom); yet, it may not be uninteresting to enquire, what good consequences are likely to result from a Representative of the people in Parliament standing aloof from all political connexions.

We must, however, pre-suppose, in the first place, that the member who chalks out for himself this rare line of conduct, and invariably pursues it, is gifted with those intellectual qualities, which at once inspire confidence, and command admiration; or else his influence can be but little felt, in the hoarse din of factions, however his private virtues may be deservedly the theme of general panegyric. To be irresistibly impelled, by a love of justice and regard for worth, into a contest against those, with whom we have lived in habits of intimacy and friendship, may be regarded, perhaps, as one of the greatest efforts of patriotism. Such generous devotion to the public service, is, indeed, so seldom witnessed, that, when an orator seizes every opportunity to proclaim his resolution of upholding the liberties of the people, and of acquiescing in no measure, directly or indirectly, but such as is essentially connected with the well-being of the state, much less to enter, from party principles, into a systematic opposition to the measures of government, we are apt to hear those protestations with a sneer of derision, and to suspect, that he has no other aim in promulging them, than the selfish, but

very natural one, of obtaining a place and emolument.

He must give, then, proofs the most undeniable, that he is sincere and steadfast in his great undertaking, before we can be even persuaded, that no motive, but a firm conviction of the moral benefit and commendable example he shall impart to others, could have pricked him on to stand forth as a candidate for the illustrious title of a real patriot. And, even when we are thoroughly satisfied, he will not betray the hopes reposed on him, what dangers has he to encounter, what passions to subdue, what intrigues to baffle, what temptations to withstand, what factions to crush, and what scurrility, private as well as public, to endure, in his political capacity, before the extent of his herculean toil can be properly appreciated, and his reputation be commensurate to it. No wonder, then, that men possessing birth, fortune, talents of various kinds, and the most spirited dispositions, should yet prefer the shackles of party, to such a perilous and discouraging post of duty; as that unquestionably is, of equally opposing the Court, and the people, when-

ever the views of either are marked by injustice. The difficulties of sustaining the character of a true patriot for any continuance of time, being of such complexion as to be almost regarded as next to impossible, let us proceed to form some estimate of the general good likely to be communicated, from a man pursuing a line of conduct so worthy of the most lasting veneration and gratitude.

If we could believe with those, whose furious and indiscriminate zeal for a reform in Parliament, has led them to go the unwarrantable length of asserting, that the House of Commons is entirely composed of placemen, pensioners, and purchasers of boroughs, it must be obvious, that a single voice, however eloquent and independent, could not possess the smallest weight in an assembly filled with persons of their principles, and description. But the fact, fortunately for us, is far from being so. There are many, doubtless, in the House of Commons, who suffer their interests to swerve them from their duty; yet it is also as indisputable, that no act of public rapacity, despotism, or infringement upon the constitution, can be committed, but what

some will be found in that assembly, to elevate their voices against it, until the delinquent be brought to the bar of offended justice.

When a member of parliament has succeeded, then, in acquiring for himself the rare fame of forming the most impartial judgment concerning the real character and tendency of public measures, and, consequently, of disdaining to be enlisted under the banners of any faction, occasions may arise, where such integrity and public-spiritedness will produce effects the most important to the national peace, prosperity, and happiness. For though it may not be safe to lay it down as a position, without much reserve and limitation, that an assembly like that of the House of Commons, is often governed by the impulse of one mind, unless the possessor of it held not, at the same time, the office of prime minister: yet the memorable decision passed there upon the slave trade, clearly demonstrates to us, that one who was never called upon to dispense the favours of the crown, was yet able, from the firmly established opinion, that, in his long public career, he did every thing according to

principle, and nothing according to party, to stop the progress of corruption in its worst of forms, and to retrieve the character of the nation, by exalting the hitherto persecuted and enslaved Africans, into the scale of free and rational beings.

In another point of view, the character of the member of parliament, who equally enjoys the respect of the government and the confidence of the public, may be contemplated, as operating upon the spirit of the latter, and giving it a right direction, where otherwise it would have slept, or been crushed. When a king wishes to enlarge the prerogative, or a minister covets a power, which the constitution denies him, the good effects, then, of that happy confidence, will be more extensive, than it may be, perhaps, at first conceived. Should the House of Commons defeat the great purposes of its representation, by manifesting no other virtue than pliability, no other policy than self-interest, the true patriot will never sit down satisfied, until he has succeeded in unfolding to the public eye all those secret ministerial springs, whereby so many free agents are converted into mere machines, or

into mutes, whose sole and degrading office is, to stand like a drove of oxen, to be counted on a division. But to undo link by link, and open spring by spring, is an operation of such nice and delicate nature, as can only be completely executed by the hand of the master workman. That, then, accomplished, the people are prepared to enforce by practice, the principles which have been so strongly impressed on their minds. They are awakened to a strict attention to the conduct of their representatives; and all the substantial checks which they can employ, are put in use, to bring back the constitution to its true principles; nor do they ever cease persevering, when thus their spirit and intelligence are called forth, until they have perfectly attained their ends. By such means, a whole nation has been, and may be again, moved and animated by one individual. Thus, has the column of public freedom been made to stand upon a firmer basis, when its superstructure was, perhaps, on the point of being diminished.

The man, who so essentially contributes to promote the happiness, and to secure the liberties of

his fellow citizens, without having the wish or hope to obtain the seals of office, will not, however, be so intoxicated with the general applause and admiration which, under such circumstances, must accompany his footsteps, as to sacrifice that high respect and gratitude he has gained in the breasts of sober and reflecting minds, to the vain and precarious favour of the multitude; but, on the contrary, will still remain inspired, as he was before, with the same real love of true glory, and with the same real dislike of popular fame. “ *Est enim gloria, solida quædam res expressa non adumbrata; ea est consentiens laus bonorum, incorrupta vox bene judicantium de eccellente virtute. Ea virtuti resonat tanquam imago gloriæ. Quæ quia recte factorum plerumque comes est, non est bonis viris repudianda. Illa autem quæ se ejus imitricem esse vult, temeraria atque inconsiderata, et plerumque peccatorum vitiorumque laudatrix famæ popularis, simulatione honestatis, formam ejus pulchritudinemque corrumpit.*”*

* Cicero Tusc. Quæst. Lib. III.

ESSAY IV.

*On the Condition and Character of Women in
different Countries and Ages.*

IF the enlightened among our sex have rejoiced that they were born in a period of high civilization, how much greater cause have those of the other, to congratulate themselves upon the same event. Since, in polished nations, it is rarely the hard fate of women to be first adored, and then oppressed. We do not begin by being their slaves, and end in becoming their tyrants. For when the transient charms of youth and beauty fade, in the place of our idols, we then make them our companions and friends.

In rude periods of society, woman is treated with the utmost coolness, indifference, contempt, and tyranny. The savage regards her only as a being of

inferior species, and, consequently, with him, the passion of love is nothing but a simple instinct of nature; which he disdains, however, to procure by any of those arts, which are calculated to win affection and favour. It is the opinion of the great Bacon, that love is the first of human pleasures, and intoxication the second. The justness of this observation is disputed by the Indians of America; according to whose philosophy, intoxication is the greatest of human pleasures. It may be advanced, as another proof of the contempt and servitude in which women are held by savages, that, in their drunken assemblies, they are allowed to be present at them only for the menial and degrading purpose of supplying the liquor, and taking care of their sovereigns, when their reason is extinguished. Among the American tribes, the condition of women may be compared, indeed, to that of the Helotes among the Spartans, a vanquished race, doomed to pass their whole life in administering to the wants of their conquerors. The rigorous despotism exercised by barbarians over the female sex, will be found to constitute their general character, in almost every quarter of the globe.

If we turn our eyes towards the eastern nations, to Turkey, Persia, Mogul, Japan, and the empire of China, we shall see women reduced to the same state of slavery. Asia, from time immemorial, may be regarded as a vast and dreary prison, for the reception of female beauty. The cursed spirit of despotism is, indeed, as fatal to love, as to virtue. Exposed to all the caprices of a master, who looks upon female beauty as subservient to the purposes of animal enjoyment only; the will of the unhappy object of his lust must be his; since resistance in the harem would be fatal, and flight from it impossible.

Plutarch, in speaking of the Persians, has noticed the severe treatment of their wives, in such terms, as would justify us in concluding it equally met his disapprobation and that of his countrymen; but the domestic institutions of the Greeks inform us, that the notions they entertained of the female character were scarcely more just and liberal than those whom the philosopher of Cheronœa styles barbarians. The Greek, like the Persian women, were excluded from society, and shut up in sequestered

apartments, which, when they left to go abroad, an indulgence but rarely granted, their faces were covered by veils; while, upon no occasion whatsoever, were they permitted to appear at public entertainments. The wives who had been prolific, experienced, perhaps, a greater portion of liberty than that which fell to the share of the new-married woman, and the virgin; yet still they had just reason to complain of the bolts and bars placed in their chambers by the jealousy or tyranny of their lords.* The possibility, however, of escaping from the hands of their oppressors, was presented to them by a divorce: but that could not be effected without the consent of both parties. In this manner, the wife of Pericles gained her freedom.†

There was a wide contrast, however, in the condition of the Athenian, and their neighbours, the

* Ταῖς γυναικῶνι τισιν
 Σφραγίδας ἐπιβάλλουσιν ἤδη, καὶ μοχλῶς
 Τηρυντες ἡμᾶς, καὶ προσήλι Μολοτικῶς,
 Τρεφῶσι, μορμολυκεία τοῖς μοιχοῖς, κύνῶς.

See Aristophanes *Commædiæ*—*Theomophor.*

† See Plutarch in *Vita Periclis.*

Lacedæmonian women. The laws of Lycurgus did not establish such a cruel distinction between the sexes, as existed in those of Solon; for they authorized women to quit that privacy which Pericles* deemed so essential to the preservation of their character, and to frequent solemn festivals and sacrifices. In their fashions, too, we may espy the same difference, as in their manners. The Lacedæmonian virgins went abroad with their faces uncovered, while the married women invariably appeared with their veils. This custom was defended on the very natural and justifiable principle of the former, wishing to get husbands, and of the latter to keep those which they already possessed. But many will be inclined to think, that their practice of dancing naked, at those entertainments, before a concourse of male spectators, was well suited to encourage a general state of promiscuous intercourse between the sexes. It does, however, appear, that while the Spartans continued to pay that profound veneration to the statutes of their celebrated law-giver, as to fulfil them without hesitation or reserve,

* See his Speech in Thucydides, Lib. II.

adultery was a crime so rare among them, that no punishment was assigned for it:* but when the stern virtues of their ancestors were no longer inscribed upon their minds, or actions, the licentiousness of the women arose to such an extravagant pitch, that they were even stigmatized by writers with the epithet *ανδρομανεῖς*.†

In surveying the condition of women in the states of Greece, especially in Athens, our attention cannot fail to be arrested by the pomp and splendour

* In Plutarch, the judge and panegyrist of so many illustrious men, we read that Geradas, a primitive Spartan, being asked by a stranger what punishment their law had for an adulterer, replied, that it would be just as possible to find one in Sparta, as it would be to meet with a bull, whose neck should be so long as to reach over the mountain Taygetas, and drink of the river Eurotas, that lay on the other side.—See Vita Lycurg. From this speech, we are not, then, of course, to suppose the invitations which the Spartans were accustomed to give to handsome men, to share the favour of their wives, from the patriotic principle of supplying the state with a robust progeny, are to be ranked under the name of adultery.

† This term, which may be interpreted, running mad after men, strongly paints the unbounded lasciviousness of the Spartan women. It was given them by Euripides, and is cited by Plutarch in his Vita Numæ.

assumed by the courtezans, and the honours to which they openly aspired, and which they received. While the married females, as we have already shewn, were subjected to the most mortifying inferiority, and esteemed only worthy to perform the meanest functions of domestic œconomy. Various causes have been suggested to account for that curious and important fact; but the following, perhaps, will be admitted by the philosopher as the most satisfactory and conclusive.

It is well known, that in many of the Greek colonies of Asia, temples were erected to Venus, in which voluptuousness and superstition equally concurred, not only to protect harlots, but even to raise them to the rank of priestesses of that meretricious divinity. In Grecian story, the people of Corinth were noted even to a proverb, for indulging their sensual passions without reserve; and that city was the first which introduced a colony of those aspiring females from the East. We are told by an historian,* whose authority is deservedly of great

* See Strabo, Lib. VIII.

weight, that Corinth could number at a time a thousand females, who prostituted their charms for hire* in the temple of the goddess of beauty. Upon the efficacy of their prayers to Venus, these strumpets seemed to place the firmest reliance; for they had recourse to them in every situation of difficulty and danger. Miltiades and Themistocles were even supposed to have become the saviours of Greece, because these votaries of lust had invoked their tutelary† deity for the success of their armies.

* *Οὐ παντός ἀνδρός ἐς Κορινθὸν ἔθόπλις.*—This proverb, so common in Greece, which Horace has thus translated, “*Non cuivis hominum contingit adire Corinthum,*” is generally supposed to have taken its rise from some of these harlots admitting none to their embraces, but those who could afford to pay the most exorbitant price. It is recorded, that Demosthenes visited Corinth for the express purpose of passing a night with the famous strumpet Lais: but the enormous tax which she exacted for that pleasure, ten thousand drachmas, in our money about three hundred pounds, produced this exclamation from the mouth of the orator, *ὦν, ὦνμαι, μυριαν δραχμῶν μετὰ μελείαν.* See Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticæ*, Lib. I. Cap. VIII.

† The magistrates of that republic even ordered their portraits to be painted at the public expence, in gratitude for their powerful intercessions.—See Athenæus *Deipnosophistæ*, Lib. XIII.

This class of women were even associated to religion, by the arts. The famous Phryné, who had amassed such a treasure by the free use of her captivating person, as to have proposed taking upon herself the whole expence of re-building* the walls of Thebes, which had been demolished by Alexander, served as a model to the great masters of sculpture and painting, Praxiteles and Apelles, for their most unrivalled productions. Her exquisite beauty is said to have inspired the former with the idea of his Cnidian Venus, so rapturously extolled by Lucian,† and for the possession of which, Nicomedes, king of Bithynia, in vain offered to discharge the immense debts of that republic.‡ And the celebrated picture of Venus Anadyomene, which adorned the temple of Æsculapius, in the island of

* Provided, however, that the following unparalleled inscription was placed on them; *Alexander diruit, sed meretrix Phryne refecit*; but it was refused.—See Pliny, Lib. XXXIV. Cap. VIII. —Lib. XXXVII. Cap. V.

† See Lucian. De Amor.

‡ See Pausanias, Lib. I. Cap. XL.—Lib. VIII. Cap. IX. and Pliny, Lib. VII. Cap. XXXIV.

Cos,* was undertaken by the latter, from having seen Phryné on the sea-shore, with no other covering than her long and floating tresses. The greater part of the courtezans were likewise musicians; and an art so much admired in Greece, and so well adapted to inflame and nourish every voluptuous passion, and, consequently, so deeply connected with their own interests and fame, we can readily believe their skill to have been prodigious.

It is also known, how grateful the sight of beauty was to the Greeks; and how often they were the dupes and instruments of it in their military and civil transactions. Enthusiastic in all their feelings, the ardent souls and inflammable imaginations of this people, adored beauty in the temples, admired it in master-pieces of the arts, contemplated it in the games and exercises, and gave prizes to it in the public festivals. But the restraint and seclusion in which

* The supposed place where Apelles was born. But Augustus afterwards obtained this incomparable painting, and remitted to the inhabitants as an equivalent for it, the sum of three hundred talents, upon the tribute which they owed to his exchequer.—“Φασι δε τοις Κωοις αντι της γραφής εκατόν ταλαντον αφειν γενεθαι τε προσταχθεντος φορη.”—See Strabo, Lib. XIV.

the married women, especially among the Athenians, were kept, and the incessant toil and drudgery to which they were exposed; extinguished in them all solicitude to set off whatever natural beauty they possessed to the greatest advantage. That homage, therefore, which they ought, and would have received, if they had not been excluded by the law, from cultivating a refinement of taste and manners, by mixing in society,* was necessarily engrossed by the courtezans, who, fettered by no occupations of that kind, were left at full leisure to study every captivating variety of dress, and to heighten the effect of their personal charms by a display of all those accomplishments, which can engage and delight. The courtezans of Athens lived in a public manner; and to their entertainments, orators, philosophers, and poets, and all who were eminent in any department of art or science, constantly repaired, for the sake of those qualities, that were so attractive and pleasant in the scene of diversion, and private society. Thus they imparted to the

* Except for the purpose of attending a procession or a funeral, (see Lysias Orations, p. 420) they were scarcely ever permitted to appear abroad, as we have before observed.

men of letters, an elegance of manners, a playfulness of wit, and turn of pleasantry delicately ironical, while they, in return, by occasionally frequenting their schools, gained from them an elevation and enlargement of mind, which rendered their conversation brilliant in the highest degree.

Among this meretricious class, there was one who acquired such an ascendancy over superior minds, as even to become the object of public consideration. The name of the celebrated Aspasia, the mistress of Pericles will here, doubtless, present itself to the recollection of the classical reader. She is said to have been born at Miletus; and such was the combination of extraordinary endowments found in her, that the historians who have recorded her praises, seem to be undetermined whether she most excelled in her person or in her mind. The grave and enlightened Socrates was mute and attentive when she spoke; and Pericles placed such confidence in her judgment, as to consult her on all state matters of great moment. Plato, whose character for sagacity and political knowledge was equalled by few, and surpassed by

none, of his contemporaries, hesitates not to pay her the remarkable compliment of saying, that her instructions contributed powerfully to form the greatest and most eloquent orators of her age.* While Plutarch,† although inclined to consider her as the author of the Peloponnesian war, and to stigmatize her licentiousness with a manly indignation, yet relates, as an indisputable proof of her deep skill in the science of politics, that one Lysicles, by attaching himself to her society, after the death of Pericles, arose from the meanest origin and education to the first employment in the republic. So various and splendid, indeed, were her attainments, that they seem to have communicated a degree of glory to her profligate profession. Yet, we cannot help thinking, there is too much exaggeration in the remark, that her example and instruction rendered Athens the school of vice and pleasure, when it is stated, at the same time, to have been the custom for husbands to carry their wives to her house, to be instructed by her discourses;

* See Harpocration voce Aspasia.—Plato in Menexeno.

† See Vita Periclis.

although they were perfectly aware, it was not less a seminary for prostitution than for oratory.* They, therefore, who could treat their wives with such unprecedented indelicacy and disrespect, must surely be considered, by all impartial judges, to complain with a very ill grace of the dissoluteness of Aspasia and her companions.

These reasons will serve to account for the homages which courtezans so often received in Greece. Without them, we should indeed, but darkly comprehend why they become the objects of such excessive admiration to orators, philosophers, poets, painters, and statuaries. Why Phryn  had a statue of gold at Delphi, placed between the statues of two kings, and why some of them, after their death, should be

* Upon this circumstance, which is so singular that we safely pronounce it to be without parallel in the history of any other people of antiquity, Plutarch expresses himself in the clearest terms:—“Τας γυναικας ακροατομενας οϊ συνεδεις ηγον εις αυτην, και περι κ κοσμις προεζωσαν εργασιαις, εδε σεμνης αλλα παιδισκας εταιρισκας τρεφισαν.”—See Vita Periclis. The latter part of this assertion is confirmed by Athen us:—Και Ασπασια δε η Σωκρατικη ενεπορευελο πληθη καλων γυναικων και επληθυνεν απο των ταυτης εταιριδων η Ελλας.”—Lib. XIII. p. 570.

honoured with splendid monuments. The traveler, in his approach to Athens, says an eminent Greek writer, Dicaearchus, beholds afar off a mausoleum on the side of the road, which attracts his attention. He conceives it to be the tomb of Miltiades or of Pericles, or of some other illustrious character who has served his country. He at length draws near to it, and finds it to be a courtesan of Athens, who is interred with such pomp. And in a letter to Alexander, Theopompus, speaking of this same mausoleum, emphatically observes, "This distinguished mark of public respect a courtesan has received, while of all those who perished in Asia, fighting for the general safety of Greece, there is not one whose ashes have received, or even been thought worthy to receive, a similar honour."*

Such was the senseless extravagance, inconsistency, degeneracy, and ingratitude of the Athenians. But these traits were perfectly accordant with the character of a people, who could banish Themistocles, starve Aristides, poison Socrates, prefer the licentious buffoonery of Aristophanes to the sublime and

* Apud Athenæum.

pathetic compositions of Sophocles and Euripides ; reverence the sanctity of marriage, and yet suffer themselves to be governed by Aspasia, and her school of harlots.

The condition of the Roman, was, unquestionably, not so grievous as that of the Grecian women. The former were not excluded, like the latter, from all social intercourse ; nor could they complain of their behaviour being so attentively watched, or so severely scrutinized. Yet among the primitive Romans, the matrimonial contract was most unequal on the side of the woman, and can only be regarded in the degrading light of the conjunction of a master with a slave.* For the stern spirit of the laws gave them the right of life and death over their helpless partners ; and in the cases of adultery or intoxication, † the husband, on consulting with

* See Aulus Gellius, Lib. X. Cap. XXIII.

† The same fatal penalty might be inflicted if she even tasted wine without his knowledge. Non licebat vinum fæminis Romanis bibere invenimus inter exempla Egnatii Mezennii uxorem quod vinum bibisset a dolio interfectam furte enim cædis a Romulo absolutum.—See Pliny, Lib. XIV. Cap. XIV. Their notion was, that the use of wine provoked amorous passions.

his friends, might, if he pleased, carry the sentence into execution. Of the coldness and insensibility of the Romans towards their wives, or at least of the grossness of their love, a remarkable proof may be cited in the following declaration, which Metellus Numidius made to the Roman people, that, if kind nature had enabled us to do without a wife, we should be delivered from a very troublesome companion: but, since she had so ordered it, that we could neither live with our wives happily enough, nor without them by any means, we must look to matrimony rather for our lasting security, than for a transient gratification.*

Yet still, however, instances can be adduced to shew, that the Romans, in the period under review, treated their wives with some degree of esteem and confidence. Ignorant of arts and pleasures, war and labour were then the chief amusements of a Roman. But after his dangers and toils, he disdained not to partake with his wife in all the cares

* See Aulus Gellius, Lib. I. Cap. VI.

of domestic life;* and next in estimation to the glory of being honoured by the state for his valour, were the praises it drew from her lips. Nothing, indeed, seems to have been omitted that could inspire the women with a love of virtue and modesty, or indispose them to copy the grave and austere manners of their husbands. A perpetual tutelage, the censure of magistrates, the domestic tribunals, the laws to prevent their luxury, by the regulation of marriage portions, the sumptuary laws for their ornaments, the temples erected to chastity, the temples to the goddess who presided over the peace of marriages, and the appeasement of husbands,† and the honourable decrees for the services which women rendered to the state;—all these circumstances evince the deep interest which the Romans manifested in their wives, and in the preservation of their morals.

* See the Fourteenth Satire of Juvenal, v. 166—171, for a short but lively picture of the simplicity and domestic happiness of the ancient Romans.

† It is justly observed by Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, vol. viii. octavo edit. p. 63, that the epithet of *viriplaca* too clearly indicates on which side, submission and repentance were always to be expected.

The Roman women did not exhibit that ferocious courage upon which Plutarch has past such high encomiums, in recording the acts of certain Grecian females. Their first virtue was chastity, and their point of honour, decency. It is well known, that Cato the censor, expelled a senator for having kissed his wife in the presence of his daughter. To these austere manners, the Roman women united an unbounded love for their country, which appeared on many striking occasions. Upon the death of Brutus, they clad themselves in deep mourning. And had *they* not supplicated, Rome itself would have been sacrificed to the stern vengeance of Coriolanus. The senate testified their gratitude by a public decree, which assigned to them the exclusive merit of saving their country. In the time of Brennus, their patriotism was also conspicuous, in giving all their gold for the ransom of the city. And after the fatal battle of Cannæ, when Rome had no other treasures left but the virtues of her citizens, they again consecrated their most precious ornaments to the service of the state.*

* An action which appeared so praise-worthy in the eyes of their countrymen, that from thenceforth it was permitted, by a law, to pronounce public orations in honour of the deceased person, which, till that time, was peculiar to men.

Such examples of public virtue, on the part of the Roman women, doubtless, contributed to raise them in the estimation of their husbands. But these facts are not sufficient to justify the hasty conclusions of some writers, that the marriage contract among the Romans must be considered in the light of an union of affection as well as of interest between equals, and that, therefore, all the blessings and comforts of domestic love were enjoyed by both parties. In further support of this conclusion, we are not ignorant, that they quote the fact of no Roman exercising his privilege of divorce* for the long space of five hundred and twenty years;† and that Spurius Carvilius Ruga, the first person who availed himself of that right, incurred the hatred of his countrymen. But when it is recollected, that the law gave the husband a title to treat his wife with cruelty and tyranny, and upon this account, she carefully avoided affording him any subject for com-

* Plutarch tells us, that Romulus allowed a husband to divorce his wife, if she had committed adultery, prepared poison; or procured false keys.

† According to Dionysius Halicarnassensis, Lib. II. P. 93, and Valerius Maximus, Lib. II. Cap. I.; and five hundred and twenty-three, according to Aulus Gellius, Lib. IV. Cap. III.

plaint, because she was entirely in his power, we are not, surely, therefore, to interpret his forbearing to dissolve the union, into a proof of his passionate fondness, or unfeigned respect for her. We likewise presume to think, that five centuries did not elapse without producing one instance of divorce among the Romans. For it does appear, that the idea of divorce was not altogether unknown even in the time of Coriolanus, as may be inferred from his advice to his wife, when he went into banishment, to marry a man more fortunate than himself. And with respect to the disgrace into which Carvilius fell with the people, for dismissing his wife, we are not to place their disapprobation to the injustice of that act, but to his having divorced her by the desire of the censors, on account of barrenness, to whose interference they, upon occasions of this kind, always evinced the utmost dread and repugnance.*

The custom, also, of lending a wife to a friend, in order that he might have children by her, at once

* Montesquieu has ably examined and elucidated this subject, in his *Esprit des Loix*, Lib. XVI. Cap. XVI.

demonstrates the impurity of manners among the Romans, and the small respect and regard which they entertained for the female sex. And this practice, which appears to have prevailed among the old Romans,* was openly countenanced by the younger Cato. According to Plutarch, the great orator Hortensius, for the purpose of drawing still closer the ties of friendship and intimacy which already existed between him and Cato, applied, in the first place, to have the use of his daughter Porcia, the wife of Bibulus. But this proposal not being relished by Cato, on the ground of its being the husband's affair, Hortensius had the modest assurance to ask his friend for his own wife Marcia,

* We learn from Plutarch, in his comparison of Numa and Lycurgus, that the former legislator permitted a Roman husband, after his wife had brought him a sufficient number of children, either to make her over to any person who wished to have a family, or to lend her out for a certain time. This last practice was also common among the Greeks. It is well known that Alcibiades enjoyed the person of Xantippe, by the permission of Socrates, her husband. And, in this instance, no symptoms of her refractory temper are said to have been discovered by the philosopher. The classical reader will also remember, that Plato himself, whose system of ethics is, perhaps, more perfect than any other heathen moralist, has yet prescribed a community of wives in his plan of a perfect commonwealth.

who then happened to be in a state of pregnancy. When, so far from expressing the least anger or displeasure at this unparalleled request, Cato turned a willing ear to it, and, by consent of Phillippus, the father of Marcia, whose interference, in a legal point of view, was necessary, Hortensius thus obtained possession of her person.*

This anecdote, recorded of one of the gravest and most virtuous citizens ever produced by the republic of Rome, may be adduced as an incontestible evidence of the unworthy† treatment to which women, even of the highest rank and character, were exposed; and will warrant the assumption, that although the laws and public institutions affected to respect the sanctity of marriage, and to look upon women as the objects of rational esteem

* See a full account of this transaction, so offensive to modern feelings and delicacy, in Plutarch, *Vita Catonis*.

† The astonishing fact, mentioned by Livy, *Lib. VIII. Cap. XVIII.* of one hundred and ninety noble matrons being convicted of the crime of poisoning their husbands, should teach some writers to be less peremptory in their assertions respecting the matrimonial happiness of the women in the early days of the commonwealth.

and attachment, yet the Romans are the last people among the nations of antiquity, who can, with propriety, be said to exhibit a pleasing spectacle of delicacy and morality, in their conjugal passions or agreements.

But, about the end of the commonwealth, a remarkable change took place in the condition, taste, and sentiments, of the Roman women. The immense wealth which the conquest of so many opulent nations poured into the capital of the empire, paved the way for the appearance of every species of luxury and vice, among both sexes. Women then began to emerge from their domestic confinement, and to shake off the weight of the matrimonial yoke. New wants and new passions filled their souls: and the loss of reputation, when subservient to the means of promoting their power, and gratifying their love of distinction, never occasioned a painful emotion, much less marred their general felicity. At the slightest offence, the nuptial knot might then be untied by either of the parties. Such, indeed, was the facility of separation, that marriage could only be viewed in the

degrading light of a transient connection, formed upon the convenient basis of mutual pleasure and profit. Even those who aspired to be contemplated by the people as models of purity and virtue, hesitated not to indulge themselves in the unlimited freedom of divorce. Marcus Brutus repudiated his wife Claudia, although her fidelity was unquestionable. Cicero acted in the same manner by his wife Terentia, with whom he had lived for thirty years;* and we are told, it was afterwards her miserable or happy lot to receive the embraces of three successive husbands; the first of whom was the historian Sallust, who from that time is said to have declared himself the implacable enemy of Cicero.† This species of legal prostitution, for well does the nature of the marriage union of the Romans, at this period, merit such an appellation, must have prompted Julius

* In extenuation, however, of this apparently ungenerous treatment, it must be remembered, that she was suspected of having violated the honor of his bed, during his exile in Asia.

† From what cause we are at a loss to determine; but it is certain that his veracity as an historian is justly impeached, for omitting several actions, in his relation of Cataline's conspiracy, which reflected the highest honour upon the first husband of Terentia.

Cæsar to meditate that licentious law, which was to have granted to him the exclusive liberty of possessing a seraglio of wives.* In short, it might be reasonably supposed, that the Romans of both sexes had then attained the highest pitch of debauchery, if we could cease to forget the scenes of unbounded luxury and lust displayed after the establishment of monarchy.

Under the emperors, the great inequality of ranks, the outrageous abuse of riches, the ridicule attached to every law of decency and morality, and the ungovernable fury with which the higher orders of women alike abandoned themselves to their cruel and sensual passions, and the frequent practice of the most unnatural vices and crimes, could not fail to bring on the maturity of depravation. We may conceive at once the perfection of vice to which the women had arrived, even in the time of Augustus, and the secret contempt and disgust with which they

* Helvius Cinna Trib. pleb. plerisque confessus est, habuisse scriptam paratamque legem, quam Cæsar ferre jussisset, cum ipse abesset, uti uxores liberores quærendorum causa, quas et quot vellet ducere liberet.—Suetonius, in Julio, Cap. LII.

had inspired those who participated in their favours, from that remarkable declaration in the speech* which he made to press the Romans to marriage. That the rewards which he had offered to induce them to resign their fondness for a life of celibacy, were of such a magnitude, that 'thousands would be happy to hazard their lives in the prospect of attaining them; yet for those rewards, when offered as incentives to marriage, none would step forth to receive them. Armed, however, as Augustus was, with despotic power, yet, after a long struggle, he felt his design of enforcing the bonds of marriage so unpopular, that he was obliged to renounce it as hopeless, and impracticable.† So common, indeed, was the infidelity of the spouse under him and his successors, that Valerius Maximus, who lived in the reign of Tiberius, assures us, men were induced to marry from the sole consideration of enriching themselves by the forfeiture of the wife's dower, when she committed adultery.‡

* See this discourse in Dion. Cassius, Lib. LVI.

† See Suetonius in Augusto, Cap. XXXIV.

‡ Valer. Maximus, Lib. VI. Cap. III.

In his profligate age, we also learn, that a great number of women of condition were not ashamed to present themselves publicly before their Ædiles, in order to be inscribed in the list of courtezans, and to break down, by their own infamy, that barrier which the laws had in vain opposed to their prostitution.* While Seneca declares, that some of the most exalted rank were accustomed to compute their years, not by the number of consuls, but of husbands.†

From that period, to the accession of Septimus Severus, the utmost lines of vice may be delineated in the conduct of the Roman women. The high and low born were involved in one general course of prostitution.‡ Every pleasure which did not violate the rules of decency and virtue, was deemed

* See Tacitus Annalia, Lib. II. Cap. LXXXV.

† Non consulum numero, sed maritorum annos suos computant.—De Beneficiis, Lib. III. Cap. XVI.

‡ Iamque eadem summis pariter minimisque libido ;
Nec melior, silicem pedibus quæ conterit atrum
Quam quæ longorum vehitur cervice Syrorum.

Juvenal, Sat. VI. v. 348—350.

trivial and unmeaning. The Roman ladies then took great pleasure to display their skill in the masculine exercises of fencers and gladiators. The rage for spectacles, also, seized them in the intervals of lust. The tragic or the comic actor was, in their eyes, an object worthy of the most passionate attachment; a flute player swallowed up patrimonies, and gave heirs to the descendants of Scipio's and Emilius's; and the life of a husband was not so estimable as that of a lap-dog.* Lost to all sense of shame and feeling, the hideous art of abortions was brought to the summit of perfection: † and, in the madness of their lewd and capricious passions, the slaves of high-born females were transformed into those monsters of Asia, eunuchs, ‡ to

* *Morte viri cupient animam servare catellæ.*—Sat. VI. v. 653.

† *Sed jacet aurato vix ulla puerpera lecto
Tantum artes hujus, tantum medicamina possunt,
Quæ steriles facit, atque homines in ventre necandos,
Conducit.*——

Sat. VI. v. 593—596.

‡ *Sunt, quas eunuchi imbelles, ac mollia semper
Oscula delectent, et desperatio barbæ
Et quod abortivo non est opus.*

Sat. VI. v. 365—367.

add to the variety of their gross and unnatural pleasures. While so extensive was the abuse of divorce, that even eight husbands* in five years were insufficient to satisfy their insatiate desires.

These enormous vices which Juvenal† has exposed with all the fire of his malignant genius, and occasionally arraigned with all the dignity of a true censor, seem to have reached their meridian at the period that Septimus Severus obtained the undisputed possession of the empire. For we find the laws then more disposed to throw a veil over the crimes of Rome, such was their nature and number, than

* Such at that time was the licence of divorce, that the above-mentioned number of husbands was permitted by the Roman law. And the epigrammatist, Martial, the contemporary of Juvenal, points his satire against Thelesina, as an adulteress, by representing her preposterous violation of the law, in having ten husbands in a month.

Aut minus, aut certe non plus tricesima lux est,
Et nubit decimo, jam Thelesina viro.
Quæ nubit toties, adultera lege est.

Lib. VI. Epig. VII.

† Whoever wishes to see an abominable picture of female licentiousness, drawn by the hand of a great master, should peruse the Tenth Satire of Juvenal.

to punish them. That successful and despotic Emperor was obliged to renounce his project of reformation, in consequence of finding three thousand accusations of adultery inscribed on the public register.

But that this Essay may not be considered either as a satire or a panegyric upon the female character, instead of a collection of facts, we shall observe, that profligate as the age of Juvenal unquestionably was, yet the corruption was not so general, but that some marks of ancient virtue could be traced. The poet, if the temper of his mind had led him to praise rather than to condemn, to exalt rather than to vilify, might have worthily commemorated the conjugal heroism of that Aria, who, to encourage her husband in his design of freeing himself from the vengeance of Claudius by death, first plunged the dagger in her own breast, and then presented it to him. The same example was followed by her daughter, the wife of Thræsea, and the daughter of Thræsea, the wife of Helvidius Priscus, who both merited two such illustrious characters for their

husbands. In handing down to execration the memory of Nero, Juvenal might have sung the praises of Paulina, the wife of Seneca, whose determination to share the same fate with her husband, was only prevented by the cruel kindness of Nero, and who exhibited in her countenance an honourable* paleness, which attested that part of her blood had flowed with that of her husband. A fit subject, also, for his independent muse, would have been the character of Agrippina, the wife of the celebrated Germanicus. Early doomed to experience the sad vicissitudes of fortune, a model of purity in the most vicious of periods, as implacable in her hatred of Tiberius as faithful to her husband, she passed her life in lamenting the untimely fate of the one, and detesting the crimes of the other. And as the satirist never lost the opportunity of exposing the inhumanity of the masters of the world, his energetic lines might have set before our

* Cui addidit paucos postea annos, laudabili in maritum memoria, et ore ac manibus in eum pallorem albensibus, ut ostentui esset, multum vitalis spiritus egestum.—Tacitus Annalia, Lib. XV. Cap. LXIV.

eyes a most impressive picture of the unfeeling heart of Vespasian, which could not be even moved by the rare and unmerited sufferings of the virtuous Eponina. To escape the deadly hatred of the Emperor, her husband, Julius Sabinus, for nine successive years became the inhabitant of a subterraneous cavern. She found out his place of concealment, devoted her whole time to him; and sought to supply him with every comfort that could be enjoyed without liberty. They were, however, at last discovered. Incapable of being excited to compassion by the urgent intercessions of their friends, or by the more affecting sight of the innocent twins, the fruit of Eponina's visits to the cave; the brutal Vespasian sentenced the husband not to a simple and speedy, but to a cruel death. Torn from the embrace of her lord, the distracted wife, in the height of her resentment and despair, loaded the tyrant with reproaches, and exclaimed, in the presence of him and of his courtiers, that she had lived more happily in the bowels of the earth, than he did, though surrounded by the splendour of a throne. This speech sealed her doom. But though

her unhappy lot,* nor that of Aria and Agrippina, have arrested the notice of Juvenal, yet have their names been rescued from oblivion, and their virtues perpetuated in the immortal writings of Pliny and Tacitus.

In the commencement of the fourth century, † the introduction and establishment of the Christian religion into the Roman world, was the consequence of another great revolution in the female character. The pagan theology was but ill-suited to improve the manners of women; for it partook more of ceremonies, than of precepts. Lustrations and processions supplied the place of a clear conscience, and a uniform course of virtue. It is easy,

* The romantic history of this affectionate couple, has been recorded by Plutarch, in his *Amatoriæ Narrationes*, p. 770, 771. And an interesting tragedy in the French and Italian language has been likewise founded upon it:—*Sabine et Eponine Tragedie*, par M. Richer.—Paris, Prault. 1735. *Eponina, Tragedia di Ginsepe Bartoli in Torino*. Mairresse, 1767.

† In Anno Domini 324, circular letters were written by the orders of the Emperor, to all his subjects, exhorting them to embrace the Christian religion, after his example.—See Eusebius *Vita Constantani Magni*, Lib. II. Cap. 24—42, Cap. 48—60.

therefore, to conceive the mighty change which Christianity effected in them ; since among the severe laws which it imposed on women, it made marriage no longer a political, but a sacred tie ; and did not confine its empire to their actions, but extended it even to their thoughts.

The legislation of the Greeks and Romans looked only to the political interest of societies : but the Christian code, while it inculcated the practice of every public and private virtue, inspired its followers with a contempt for this world, and sought to fix their minds upon a future state of rewards and punishments. This contempt of the world rendered them ambitious of perfection in the virtues of self-mortification and chastity. The life of woman then, was one perpetual struggle between her sensual and her spiritual desires. To love and to cherish our fellow creatures was justly reckoned among the first of evangelical virtues. Women, young, rich, and beautiful, were then seen to abandon the amusements of the theatre, in order to comfort and relieve the aged, the sick, and the poor. The works of that successful advocate for celibacy, St. Jerom,

perpetually resound with the praises of Paula,* her daughter Eustochium; and other illustrious penitents, who, by his eloquent persuasions, devoted their whole days and nights to the study of the scriptural writings.

When the Roman empire was overturned by the warlike barbarians of Scythia and Germany, to soften their savage manners, Christianity passed from the vanquished to the conquerors, and was almost uniformly introduced by the female sex. It has been often remarked, that women have in all times been more possessed than men with that ardent zeal for religion, which makes proselytism their chief aim. But to whatever cause this fact may be attributed, whether to their superior susceptibility of impression, or to their habits of quick and intelligent observation, it is indisputable, that most nations are indebted for their conversion to the charms of a believing queen. By such means, the evangelical light was gradually diffused through France,

* St. Jerom wrote a particular treatise upon the unexampled piety of that celebrated widow. It is to be found in his works, under the title of Epitaph. Paula.

England, part of Germany, Bavaria, Hungary, Bohemia, Lithuania, Poland, and Russia. And likewise through female influence, Lombardy and Spain were led to renounce the doctrines of Arius,

In contemplating the invasion of the barbarians of the north, we cannot fail to be struck with the important changes which they introduced in manners. Whoever studies their history, will perceive the invariable respect which they testified towards the female sex. Their ferocity, as hunters or warriors, was alone softened by the enthusiasm of love. Their forests might be styled the cradles of chivalry.* To possess the object of his passion, the warrior was disposed to encounter every danger. Frequently a battle, then, could be viewed only as a number of separate duels, between combatants animated by a strong personal animosity against each other, in consequence of their ambition to signalize themselves in the eyes of their respective

* Some faint vestiges of the ceremony of knighthood may be discovered in the early history of the Germans.—*Framea scutoque juvenem ornant*, says Tacitus, *Germania*, Cap. XIII.

mistresses. From this cause, their native forests were oftentimes wet with blood, and the sword decided marriages, as inheritances.

But though the barbarians who overwhelmed the Roman world, had established a new system of manners and government in the kingdoms they erected upon the ruins of that mighty empire, which gradually prepared the way for the reign of chivalry, yet many ages elapsed before it was considered as a political and military institution, by the nations of Europe. The true spirit of chivalry did not begin to manifest itself until the middle or close of the eleventh century. Yet the universal anarchy and discord, which had prevailed from the seventh century to that æra among the different states of Europe (with the sole exception of those short but splendid periods, in which a Charlemagne and an Alfred appeared), were even then, however, far from being subsided. An almost perpetual shock was occasioned in manners, by christianity being mixed with the ceremonies of the ancient heathens; in polity and laws, by the rights of the priesthood being mixed with those of the throne; in govern-

ment, by the prerogatives of kings being mixed with those of the nobility; and in religion, by the Arabians and Christians being mixed in Europe. From such contrasts flowed the sources of disorder and confusion. Pilgrimages and massacres then oftentimes succeeded each other.

At the expiration, however, of the eleventh century, Europe for the first time saw all the nobles who were inspired with a sentiment of equity, religion, and heroism, forming themselves into associations, to check the spirit of ferocity and violence. Their chief object was, to take up arms against the Moors in Spain, the Saracens in the East, the tyrants of castles in Germany and France, to protect and avenge the innocent, the helpless, and the distressed; and, above all, to defend the honour and rights of the fair sex, against the violence and oppression which they so often experienced.

Soon the spirit of a noble gallantry mingled itself in this memorable institution. Each knight, in dedicating himself to the accomplishment of perilous adventures, established it as a point of honour to

regard women in the light of sovereigns. To be insensible, indeed, to the passion of love, would have incapacitated the knight from discharging some of the most essential duties of his profession. And for her who was selected as the object of adoration, he attacked and defended, he stormed castles or cities, and gloried in shedding his own blood as much as that of his enemies. Decorated in his person with tokens of regard from the hand of his fair mistress, the knight roamed from court to court, from castle to castle, in search of opportunities to display his military virtues; for until he achieved some gallant exploit, either at home or abroad, a lady would have been irretrievably ruined, in the eyes of her kindred, had she turned a willing ear to the declaration of his attachment. The liberal sentiments and generous manners which chivalry therefore introduced, and the marvellous respect and veneration it inculcated for the feebler sex, may be said to have laid the foundation of a system, which first required that women should be addressed in a style of gentleness, delicacy, and attention, unknown to the Greeks and Romans in their most polished periods, and which gave them that sensibi-

lity and refinement, that influence and consideration in society, by which they are now distinguished.

Let us stop, then, for a moment, to throw a rapid glance upon the revolution produced in the condition and manners of women, by the genius of chivalry. Subject, before, to every species of neglect and ill-usage, by the rudeness and brutality of man, it was one of the effects of this singular institution, to set them up to be worshipped as idols by their slaves or servants, the respectful titles assumed by their admirers. Love was then inseparable from honour. The ladies, proud of their empire, shared the noble passions which they inspired. Inaccessible to every sentiment unallied with glory, their manners were at once dignified, heroic, and tender. The female, who so far lost sight of the established maxims of the age, as to forget to reverence the chastity of her own person, was sure to encounter universal contempt and insult. While such was the homage paid to those whose virtue was unsullied, that the slightest mark of disrespect shewn to them by an uncourteous knight, exposed him to the danger and infamy of being treated as a

common enemy, by all who were mindful of the oath which they had taken, to become the champion of God and the ladies.*

Such was the rank and dignity which the spirit of chivalry imparted to the female sex, and such the fine propriety and guarded sensibility it rigidly exacted from them. It gave birth, also, to an innumerable multitude of works in praise of women. The verses of the bards, better known by the name of Trouverres, or Troubadours, the Italian sonnet, the plaintive romance, the poems of chivalry, and the Spanish and French romances, may be regarded as so many monuments descriptive of the love and gallantry of the times. In every rehearsal of mimic war, in tilts, tournaments, and battles, all bore a strong relation to women. The same propensity to magnify and exalt the female character, manifested itself in the lively writings of these days. The

* The most ample information relative to the rights and privileges of the order of chivalry, and the various important duties it imposed on those who were admitted into it, may be collected in *Memoirs sur l'Ancienne Chivalrie considerée comme un Etablissement Politique et Militaire*, par M. de la Curne de St. Palaye.

warrior and poet were then characters analogous to each other. The hand which brandished the lance, also touched the lyre, in honour of the sovereign of his affections.

That romantic spirit of bravery which oftentimes prompted the candidate for knighthood to attempt impossibilities, was communicated, in a great measure, to women. The crusades furnish us with many examples of their enthusiastic zeal and courage. In the field of battle, they have remained firm and undismayed; and, animated by the double force of religion and valour, have died with arms in their hands, by the sides of their lovers or husbands. In Europe, the attack or defence of a pass, or castle, was oftentimes undertaken by women; and princesses then commanded armies, and gained victories.* Such, among many others, was the celebrated Jane of Flanders, Countess of Mountfort, who protected Brittany against the united attacks of the French, Spaniards, and Genoese, by an example of female

* Those times, would seem to render Plato's notion, of assigning the same employments to women as to men, of committing to them the command of armies, and the government of states, not quite so great a paradox, as it has been generally considered.

skill and valour, that has not been surpassed in any age or country.

The next revolution which took place in the female character, may be attributed to the revival of letters in Italy. Before that memorable epoch, the thick darkness of ignorance was spread over Europe. But when the minds of men were supplied with proper models and materials, they began gradually to recover their powers. Women, too, were likewise ambitious of shewing that their mental faculties were not inferior to those of the other sex. Alessandra, the daughter of Bartolomeo Scala, chancellor of the republic of Florence, is said to have been equally conversant with the Greek and Latin tongues, at a very early age; and some of her verses in the former language, are to be found in the works of that celebrated scholar Politian. While the famous Cassandra Fideles, of Venice, may be justly regarded as a prodigy of classical literature. Such, indeed, were her extraordinary acquirements, that her name deservedly holds a high rank, even among the learned men of Italy.*

* Her letters and orations were published at Pavia, in 1636, by Jac. Philip Thomassini, a bishop in the republic of Venice.

So strong then was the passion of women for letters, and so great their proficiency in them, that we find even some desirous of exhibiting the fruits of their studies to a public audience. In the fourteenth century, the daughter of a gentleman of Bologna devoted herself to the study of the Latin language and jurisprudence. At the age of three and twenty she pronounced a funeral oration in Latin, in the great church of Bologna; and, three years after, she took the degree of Doctor, and publicly read the Institutes of Justinian, in her native city. When she had completed her thirtieth year, her reputation was so great as to raise her to the chair of jurisprudence; and her lectures were frequented by a crowd of disciples, composed of various countries and ages. The picture of this extraordinary female will be heightened by adding, that, with this knowledge of a man, she possessed all the charms and beauty of her own sex.*

* M. Thomas, in his admirable *Essai sur le Caractere, les Mœurs, et l'Esprit de Femmes dans les differens Siecles*, p. 86, to which I am indebted for many of the conclusions drawn from the facts related in this discourse, tells us, that in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the same prodigy was renewed in the same city. And it is worthy of remark, that, in the eighteenth cen-

At the end of the fourteenth century, when the knowledge of the Greek, as well as the Latin tongue, was spread over Italy, the merits of Aristotle and Plato divided the attention of the learned. The church and universities paid a servile respect and veneration to the dogmatic opinions of the former, while the writings of the latter philosopher were universally admired by poets, lovers, and women. The study of classic literature was not, however, destined to be confined to Italy. The rest of Europe was soon animated with a similar spirit. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, saw France, Spain, Germany, and England, introduced to an acquaintance with the poets, philosophers, orators, and historians, of Greece and Rome; and the records of those times bear ample testimony, that women were so distinguished for their learning, as to be qualified to enter the lists with men in literary contests; to sustain Theses in public assemblies; to

tury, a female was again raised to a chair at Bologna. It was the celebrated Laura Bassi who obtained this distinction. Her letters upon natural philosophy are said to have first instigated her relative, Lazarus Spallanzani, to the pursuit of a science, in which he afterwards acquired such high renown.

preach and mix in controversies ; to fill the chair of philosophy and jurisprudence ; to harangue in Latin before Popes ; to write Greek ; and to study Hebrew.*

Women then dedicated themselves to the pursuit of learning, with an ardour and devotion, of which it is difficult to form an idea in these times. This passion was alike felt in cloisters, courts, and even upon thrones. Of the times in which we are speaking, one of the chief objects in the minds of English queens was, the acquisition of the ancient languages. Catharine Parr is said to have translated a book ; and Lady Jane Grey's fame as a scholar, †

* M. Thomas, in his *Essai sur le Caractere, les Mœurs, et l'Esprit des Femmes*, p. 87—91, has given us the names of those females who have rendered themselves eminent in different countries, either by their own writings, or by their indefatigable application to the study of the ancient languages.

† The letter she addressed to her sister, in the Greek language, the night before her execution, the purport of which was to exhort her “to live and die in the true christian faith,” may be cited as an equal proof of her uncommon proficiency in classical learning, and her presence of mind upon that trying occasion. It is to be found in Heylin's *History of the Reformation of the Church of England*, p. 166, 167.

if we look to the age in which she lived, cannot be too highly extolled, or too loudly applauded. It is well known, that Elizabeth was intimately acquainted with the Greek and Latin classics, nor was her knowledge of the French and Spanish languages less profound.* While, from the following sentence of an author who lived and wrote in her reign, it would appear, that the ladies of the court had imitated her example. “The stranger,” † says Harrison, “that entereth the Court of England, upon the sudden, shall rather imagine himself come into some public school of the University, where many give ear to one that readeth unto them, than into a prince’s palace, if you confer this with those of other nations.” The hours now bestowed at the glass and the toilet, were then past in studying the writings of the ancients.

* The famous Roger Ascham, in proclaiming the scholastic attainments of his royal pupil Elizabeth, observes, to use his own words, “Yea, I believe, that besides her perfect readiness in Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish, she readeth here now at Windsor, more Greek every day, than some prebendary of this church doth Latin in a whole week.” See the Schoolmaster.

† See Description of Britain, Book II. Chap. XV. This work was printed in 1577.

Many pens were employed in commemorating the praises of illustrious women. Italy began soon to be overwhelmed with this description of works. After Boccaccio's Panegyric de Claris Mulieribus, upwards of twenty writers published successively eulogies upon the celebrated women of all nations. About the end of the fourteenth century, Brantome produced his entertaining work, *Memoires des Dames Illustres*. It has the unpardonable fault however, of substituting too often adulation in the place of truth. Even the characters of Catharine de Medici and Jane of Naples, this complacent biographer can consider as fit subjects for unbounded panegyric. Although the first has been accused, by the impartiality of all contemporary historians, as the murderer of her husband, and the second as the author of the civil wars in France, and the chief promoter of the massacre of the Huguenots. Yet does not Brantome scruple, in his excessive admiration of the fair sex, to maintain them innocent of those flagitious acts.

The next commendatory work upon the female sex, came from the pen of Hilarion de Coste. His

ponderous volumes contained the eulogies of all the women in the fifteenth or sixteenth century, who were either distinguished by their courage, their talents, or their virtues. But we must not expect a bigoted catholic to be much inclined to break forth into a strain of compliment upon those, who were not attached to his theological tenets. Accordingly we find, that Hilarion de Coste passes over in total silence the name of Queen Elizabeth, and indulges himself in a long and pompous eulogium upon the merits of her predecessor, who commenced her reign by the murder of the most accomplished of women, Lady Jane Grey, and who has deservedly incurred the execration of posterity, for having brought, in the short space of five years,* two hundred and seventy-seven persons to the stake, on account of religion.

The same spirit which produced, in those times, so many panegyrics upon illustrious women, pre-

* The period that Mary reigned. And it is computed, that, in that time, five bishops, twenty-one clergymen, eight lay gentlemen, eighty-four artificers, one hundred husbandmen and labourers, fifty-five women, and four children, were burnt.—See Heylin's History of the Reformation, p. 252.

pared the way for almost an equal number of publications upon the merits of women in general. The pre-eminence of the sexes, to such a pinnacle of perfection was the female character then supposed to have attained, began, for the first time, to be proposed as a question for public debate. Among those, who peculiarly signalized themselves as the assertors for the superiority of women, was that extraordinary man, Cornelius Agrippa. His history is so singular, as to merit particular notice. He was born at Cologne, in 1486, and deduced his origin from a noble family. At an early age he entered into the service of the Emperor Maximilian, and obtained from him the post of secretary. But the sword being as familiar to him as the pen, he sought fame and military experience for seven years, in the army of Italy, and, as a recompence for his exploits, received the honour of knighthood. He aspired, also, to academical as well as to martial honours, and took the different degrees of Doctor of Divinity, Laws, and Medicine, with great éclat. He was master of eight languages; and such was the versatility of his genius, and such the equal activity of his body and mind, that he commented

upon the Epistles of St. Paul, in England; gave lectures upon the philosopher's stone at Turin, taught theology at Pavia, and practised medicine in Switzerland. His eminent talents were engaged successively in the service of three or four princes and princesses. But his lofty and captious temper rendered him alike incapable of submitting to slavery, or enjoying freedom. Considered a magician by the superstition of his times, a proficient in most sciences, and twice imprisoned for the boldness of his writings, he finished his career in France, in the forty-ninth year of his age, after having excited, by turns, the pity, admiration, and contempt, of the learned of Europe.*

It was in 1509, that Cornelius Agrippa published his famous treatise, *De Fæminei Sexus Præcellentia*. From the circumstance, however, of his being a dependant, at that time, upon the bounty of the famous Margaret of Austria, who governed the Low Countries, his enemies have not been wanting

* For a full account of his adventurous life, see Bayle's *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*.

to insinuate, that interest, more than inclination, directed his pen upon this occasion. It must be confessed, at the first glance, that the nature of his connection with that princess, might seem to authorize such an opinion. But whoever has perused the work in question, cannot fail to acknowledge, that the author of it, writes like one who is completely enamoured of his subject. No doating lover ever ransacked his brains more for similes to illustrate the superlative beauty and accomplishments of his mistress, than Cornelius Agrippa has done to exalt the female above the male sex. His book is divided into thirty chapters; and in each chapter, he attempts to demonstrate the superiority of women, from proofs theological, physical, historical, cabalistical, and moral. Fable, poetry, and history, laws civil and canonical, are jumbled together, in strange confusion, to support the cause which he so heartily espoused. And his singular discourse is concluded (in which a great display of learning is certainly exhibited), by the solemn assurance, that not interest, but duty, is the real motive which has prompted him to undertake it; since, to know a truth, and not to proclaim it, is

to be regarded, according to his judgment, in the light of a criminal silence.

But though the merits of this performance are not of the first rate, yet it is still entitled to notice, as an authentic indication of the unbounded respect and admiration then shewn to the female sex. The sixteenth century, may be, perhaps, viewed as the most brilliant epoch for women. After this period, the number of pieces, in prose and poetry, in their praises, considerably diminished. The final extinction of chivalry in Europe, the abolition of tournaments, the wars of religion in Germany, France, and England, and the new taste of society, which, by increasing the intercourse of the sexes, corrupted their morals, may be referred to as the principal causes for the abatement of that, we had almost said, unnatural refinement, which required from the lover the most distant and respectful homage to the object of his passion; and, on her part, a reserve and chastity which bordered oftentimes upon a ludicrous absurdity.* Still, how-

* Various and curious instances are given by M. de la Curne de St. Palaye, in his *Memoires sur l'Ancienne Chevalrie*, &c. &c.

ever, beauty, as a possession, was, perhaps, then more coveted than by the heroes of chivalry; nor was that romantic spirit of gallantry less frequent, which instigates the lover to the most daring efforts of valour, for the sole purpose of obtaining the admiration of the fair mistress of his affections. But, after all, the only essential difference between the two systems, may be said to consist, in the first regarding sensual pleasure as a secondary, and the latter as a primary object.

If we take a view of the state of women in the seventeenth century, it will be found, that while a free communication between the sexes was only gradually commencing in Germany, England, and Spain, it was then carried to the highest pitch in Italy and France. In that latter country, especially, women of high birth began to abandon all taste for severe studies; and to confine themselves to the acquirement of those accomplishments, which might heighten the effect of their personal charms. Then did they display, for the first time, that exquisite grace in their manners, and unaffected freedom and elegance of conversation, which has ever since so

peculiarly distinguished them to their advantage, from the rest of their sex in Europe. And such is the striking inconsistency of human conduct, and human affairs, that the period when the women of France became, as it were, *the glass of fashion* to those of other European nations, was apparently the most unlikely one for such a circumstance;—when their own country was exposed to all the horrors of civil anarchy and bloodshed.

Under the regency of Anne of Austria, the women of France acquired that dominion over the minds of their husbands and lovers, which they seemed to have preserved, with very little diminution, down to the times in which we live. The famous Cardinal Retz, in his account of the Frondeurs, has fully shewn us, how entirely love presided over all their intrigues.* A revolution in the heart of a woman, then often produced a revolution in the state of public affairs. Women, in the periods to which we allude, occasionally appeared at the head of factions. While their persons were de-

* See Memoires de Cardinal Retz.

corated with scarfs, for the purpose of distinguishing the party to which they belonged. In the same saloon, were seen instruments of war mixed with instruments of music; violins with cuirasses. Women, illustrious by their birth, and eminent for their beauty, oftentimes visited the troops, and appeared in the councils of war.

In respect to the gallantry of those times, it is well known to have been of the most romantic kind. Possessed of the warm passions of a Spaniard, Anne of Austria herself, is said, if we listen to the scandalous tales of the Frönde, to have frequently deviated from the line of virtue, in the attachment she manifested to her favourites. To render a public homage to beauty, was considered an act of duty, on the part of man. The most trifling occurrences were classed with things of importance, if women were at all concerned in them. The gift of a bracelet or glove, was esteemed an event in a man's life; and love or gallantry were deemed as fit subjects for serious discussion, as the loss or gain of a battle. In two lines, less remarkable for their poetry, than for an extravagant hy-

perbole, the Duc de la Rochefoucault assures Madame de Longueville, that, to merit her affections, he had made war against kings, and would against the gods themselves.† The lover of the beautiful Mademoiselle de Guerchi, M. de Chatillon, wore her garter upon his arm in one battle. And we also read, in the memoirs of those times, that the Duc de Bellegarde, the distinguished favourite of the queen, on the eve of his departure to command an army, solicited her to honour him so far as to touch the hilt of his sword.

From that period to the present, it may be safely asserted, that, in proportion to the advancement of the fine arts, in the countries of Europe, have been the improvements in the state and accomplishments of women. They may now be said to have struck

* There was a regiment created under the name of Mademoiselle; and Monsieur wrote to the lady who attended his daughter to Orleans, in the following manner:—"A Mesdames les Comtesses Maréchales de camp dans l'armée de ma fille contre le Mazarin.

† Pour meriter son cœur, pour plaire a ses beaux yeux,
J'ai faite la guerre aux Roix, je l'aurois faite aux Dieux.

a deep root in that fairest and most enlightened portion of the globe. For even in Spain and Russia, where the progress of the arts has been so slow, in comparison with other European countries, from the superstitious and tyrannical spirit of those governments, the women are now beginning to mix in society, and, consequently, to act on the same principles of equality, independence, and freedom, as those in France and England.

Having now contemplated women, in different epochs and countries, it only remains for us to speak of their actual condition and character. But that we may not still further lengthen a discourse, already perhaps, too long, we shall confine our observations to those of our own country.

Whoever surveys the condition of woman, in savage and civilized life, will perceive that, in the one and the other, she may be said to touch the extremes of misery and happiness. Of the benefits, then, which result from an age of high refinement; like the present, there can be no question, but that women receive their full share. Without regarding

them like the sons of chivalry, or romance, as beings of a superior order, we yet acknowledge, in every act, the influence which they possess over our society. We, in fact, consider them as the grand spring, which puts it in motion. Capable, then, of imparting whatever form they please to society, it must be a matter of great satisfaction to every thinking mind, to perceive that this influence on the part of women is properly exerted; for it will not be denied, even by those who are disposed to entertain the most gloomy apprehensions respecting the future destiny of Britain, that the female character never stood higher for the cultivation of private virtue of every kind, than in the present times.

In spite of the general licentiousness which reigns on the Continent, softness, delicacy, and purity, are still the characteristics of the females of this island. They have not learned, as yet, to mistake effrontery for dignity, and they still consider, that the most indispensable of all their virtues, and that by which they obtain the greatest influence over our sex, is modesty. The absence, indeed, of this

virtue, excludes all the rest, which are its inseparable concomitants; and such is the inexpressibly captivating effect of it over their whole character, that it is the observation of Madame de Sevigné, whose acquaintance with human nature, and skill in the portraiture of every feminine passion, was inferior to none, that women should preserve their modesty, even in the very moment they are going to part with it.

The intellectual powers of our fair countrywomen are now beginning to take a wider range than they have hitherto done. Few subjects can be presented, upon which their extensive reading does not enable them to throw out some suitable ideas. In the days of the Spectator, the greatest part of the fine ladies conducted themselves as if they had really adopted that tenet of Mahomet, which forbade all kind of study to their sex. Their shameful privilege of doing nothing, was then claimed and made use of, to the fullest extent. Whereas, the most dissipated votaries of fashion, we believe, can now find time to cultivate their minds; while some individuals, in the female community, exhibit talents of the very

first order; abundant proofs, indeed, will be found in the records of authentic history, to justify the assertion, that genius has no sex. In all the departments of literature, except the philosophical one, women, we profess to think, have nearly reached to an equal degree of excellence with men, and in some, we will venture to add, eclipsed them.

We are not, however, ignorant, that the celebrated Descartes has boasted of the philosophical spirit of women. But the impartial examiner of his life, will not fail to recollect, that at the time he committed this error, in our judgment, he was persecuted by envy, and chiefly admired by two princesses. Possible it is, too, that in his royal pupils, Elizabeth and Christina, he found clearness, order, and method, but the foundation of the philosophical spirit, that hesitation and cold reason which measures every step it takes, we suspect were not to be traced in their understandings. The female mind is quick and penetrating. But to investigate a subject in all its relations, is a task which it is incapable of performing. It has more sallies than efforts. That patient

induction, therefore, which leads to the discovery of great and important truths, cannot be looked for in the intellectual character of the softer sex. But though we are not disposed to admit, that the mind of woman, in the foregoing respect, is endowed with the same powers as that of man, yet justice requires us to remember, that Madame de Chatelet made such proficiency in the study of abstracted sciences, and difficult researches, as to illustrate Leibnitz, and to translate and comment upon Newton.

In the eye of the moralist, luxury is conceived to be peculiarly ruinous to the female character. To every true lover of his country, it cannot, then, but be a source of high consolation to observe, that, in the present period of excessive refinement and corruption, the religious, domestic, and social virtues, instead of being abjured by women, as some writers would plainly wish to insinuate, are more strictly fulfilled by them, than by our sex. The spectacle is now by no means rare, of the father and sons of a family being familiar with all the immoralities of fashionable life, while the mother and daughters are

remarkable for the piety of their sentiments, and the purity of their conduct. Nor can these religious impressions be ascribed to the consequence of leading a secluded and-contemplative life, since the modern system of manners gives to the females the most unbounded liberty. We can only attribute them, then, to that sort of docility which they bring to the performance of their duties, and which teaches them to feel more than men, and reason less.

The domestic virtues should be common to both sexes. But the inferiority of men, in this respect, is so obvious, that no arguments are necessary to prove it. Where it is not so, private happiness and honour cannot be said to be secured upon the firmest foundations. Since what, for instance, would become of those two essential ingredients in forming the lasting prosperity and spirit of a nation, if conjugal fidelity were as often violated by one sex, as by the other. In the social virtues, too, it does not appear to us, by any means, extravagant to think, that the women of the present age are infinitely more conversant than our sex. If we judge women after nature, and judge them after society,

especially the society of great cities, it will, perhaps, be found, that in the latter state, the general desire of pleasing, stifles, in a great measure, all those sweet and affectionate passions, which are comprized under the virtues of sensibility. Nevertheless, though they are continually exposed, in their intercourse with the world, to meet with rivals, in rank, beauty, fortune, and intellect; circumstances which are somewhat apt to freeze their more amiable feelings, and to discourage the reciprocation of social kindnesses, yet still we are inclined to believe, that their constancy in friendship and love, is more durable than that of men.

In that species of heroic friendship, which shrinks from no sacrifice nor danger, to support the object of our regard, the women, it must be granted, are inferior to the men. In other respects, the female disposition is better adapted to the cultivation of friendship. Our rough, unbending, and unaccommodating nature, is little, indeed, framed to display those delicate and tender sentiments which may be said to constitute the graces of friendship. Oftentimes we wound most, when we attempt to ad-

minister comfort ; and, unlike the fair sex, in estimating the perfections and imperfections of our friends, we are more disposed to dwell upon their failings than their virtues.

At nos virtutes ipsas invertimus, atque
Sincerum cupimus vas incrustare.

Horace, Lib. I. Sat. III.

In great occasions, then, the friendship of the man, perhaps, is to be preferred ; but for our ordinary happiness, we cannot help thinking, that female friendship is most to be desiderated.

With respect to the attachment of the heart, the rapidity with which they shoot forth, and die away, among our own sex, would plainly seem to indicate, that, in unshaken constancy, the women are superior to the men. We might, indeed, be rather led to expect, from the excessive adulation which is so universally offered to them, for they, like princes, seldom hear the truth, that their capriciousness would have been proverbial. The number of victims to male inconstancy and perjury, prove it, however, to be otherwise. May not this superior

durability of affection in the female character, be accounted for, from the circumstance of our sex being destined either to active or public life, the busy scenes of which rarely permit them to make love the ruling passion of their souls, whereas, from the exemption of the ladies from all public employments, their mind, heart, imagination, and memory, are all affected by it; and it becomes the most important concern of their life.

We are perfectly aware of the numerous exceptions to these remarks, in the present age. That there are many women in the middling and higher classes of society, who set no value upon accomplishments which adorn retirement, whose mornings are spent in coquetry, and nights in gaming; who talk of marriage as if treachery and infidelity were its inseparable concomitants, who practice every kind of vice and folly in succession, and whose last groan, we may say with St. Evremond, is more for the loss of their beauty, than their life. Yet we may confidently boast, that the majority of the female sex, in this happy island, cultivate literature, and esteem it for its own sake, and not for a vain

and frivolous reputation; and keep their esteem for virtue, their contempt for vice, their sensibility for friendship, and their affection entire for their families, uncontaminated by all such disgraceful examples.

ESSAY V.

*On the Formation of National Characters from
Physical Causes.*

AMONG philosophical and speculative men, few subjects have been thought more worthy of examination, than that one, of how far the climates of different countries, affect their forms of government. Those theories, which ascribe the habits of government entirely to the influences of climate and situation, appear to us, as absurd and extravagant, as any which can be traced in the Republic of Plato, or the Utopia of Sir Thomas More. We shall, therefore, content ourselves with taking a summary view of them, without entering into a refutation of the radically erroneous reasonings of those, who deny the operation altogether of moral causes, upon the spirit and intelligence of the great mass of a nation.

That the northern inhabitants of the globe are more inclined to laborious exertions, than those who are exposed to the vertical rays of the sun, is a position which appears undeniable to us. But where the air is most temperate, and soil rich and inviting, that there we should certainly find a lively fancy, and ardour of soul, the fairest shoots of eloquence, and an extreme delicacy of taste, is a conclusion, which we are not warranted to make, either from a past or present view of the history of mankind. Nor can it be laid down as a principle, without very considerable modification, that undaunted resolution, and the most solid improvement in the study of science, are to be regarded as the peculiar properties of the inhabitants of a cold region.

It must be obvious to every one, that excessive heat is not calculated to render the body patient of fatigue. In the torrid zone, where the fruits of the earth spring up almost spontaneously, the disposition to sloth may be indulged without any danger of wanting the necessaries of life. On the contrary, those who dwell in cold countries must labour, or

else be exposed to the miseries of famine. In this manner, we can account for the southern Asiatic displaying, in general, less vigour and strength of body than the northern European. It is, however, asserted, by Montesquieu and other philosophers, that the qualities of the air and climate affect, in a powerful degree, the conduct and characters of nations. According to them, we are to believe, that great heat, by relaxing the fibres, and by extending the surface of the skin, where the action of the nerves is chiefly performed, excites an uncommon sensibility to all external subjects; consequently, an exquisite imagination, taste, sensibility, and vivacity, is to be peculiar to those latitudes, where the fig and the vine, the tamarind and the pine-apple, grow in the greatest natural perfection; while those, on the other hand, who live in cold climates, are said to acquire a cast of mind and temper of an opposite complexion.

But to us, no position seems more deficient in solidity, than that *Ingenia hominum ubique locorum situs format*.* We profess to think, that the intel-

* See Quintus Curtius, Lib. VIII.

lectual operations of the mind, are no more dependent upon the difference of heat and cold, of moisture or dryness, than that ferocity and cruelty are the necessary consequences of devouring a large quantity of animal food.* For, entertaining the opinion, that genius, in all its multifarious forms, is the product of every country, the following reasons, we conceive, may be satisfactorily urged.

Now, then, if it be true, that the qualities of an air and soil, usurp a decided influence over the temperament and understanding of its inhabitants, it will necessarily follow, that those people, whose situation with respect to climate is apparently simi-

* "Il est certain," says Rousseau, "que les grands mangeurs de viande sont en general cruels et feroces plus que les autres hommes. Cette observation est de tous les lieux, et de tous les tems. La barbare Angloise est connue."—See *Emile*, Tom. I. p. 274. But the unsubstantial diet which the French are famed for using, has produced effects, unfortunately, too well calculated to refute the justness of that observation. Our countryman, Sir William Temple, in his account of the United Provinces, has fallen almost into the same error, by remarking, that all fierce and bold animals are carnivorous.—Vol. I. p. 166. But Mr. Hume, in his admirable *Essay upon National Characters*, points out, with his usual acuteness, the Swedes, as a striking exception to this general observation.—Vol. I. p. 210.

lar, should be found counterparts to each other, in their manners, dispositions, or pursuits. But what resemblance, we should like to know, can be traced between the reserve and melancholy of the Dane, the loquacity and sprightliness of the Swede, so justly styled the Frenchman of the north. And, in the contiguous government of China and Japan, who will undertake to prove any similarity between the habits and principles of these two people. The distance from Athens to Sparta, or Thebes, was not so great, that many hours were consumed, even by lazy travellers, before they reached those places. Yet, in spite of the intimate connexion which existed, at different periods, between those several states, their national peculiarities were as striking, as those of the English, the Welsh, the Scots, and the Irish. A dyke of twenty-four miles, separates us from the French; the Englishman, however, who sets his foot in Calais, finds there, as opposite a set of manners and usages, from those of his own country, as if he had already reached the central province of France. If, then, England, and the neighbouring country of France, present such an uniform spectacle of dissimilar manners, it would,

assuredly, be the most paradoxical species of reasoning, to ascribe that contrast to the immediate operation of climate.

We are persuaded, then, that the great and striking diversity of manners between nations removed from each other, as France and England, must be attributed to the influences of moral causes, by which are chiefly understood, the nature of the government, the freedom or slavery, the affluence or poverty, in which the people live; their disposition to warlike or pacific habits; their antipathy to the commercial, or attachment to the fine arts. The inhabitants of this country are alike famed, throughout Europe, for their commercial spirit and unbounded love of liberty; yet he would justly subject himself to the imputation of light-headedness, who should place those qualities to the effect of its climate, and not to the peculiar form of government, to which it has been accustomed for ages, and to which, though it has been changed for a time, yet the nation has always reverted on the first opportunity. Montesquieu seems then, to us, to have pushed his favourite theory, of the capability of the

soil to infuse habits of government, to the very confines of absurdity, when he attributes our impatient disposition to the scurvy; and to the cast of our constitution, in which there is so much of the democratic mould, as to give us those notions of freedom and independence, that we become restless under any situation which imposes a restraint upon our desires.

In the minority of Louis the Fourteenth, the French parliament planned the following permanent law: which was in the nature of a Habeas Corpus Bill; namely, that every prisoner, in twenty-four hours after his confinement, should be examined by the parliament, as to the purport of his crime. But, because this wise and humane proposition was but feebly supported, and, in the end, abandoned, by the ministry of that day, are we justified in concluding, from thence, that the parliament was incapable, from physical causes, of adhering to any settled plan of liberty. We should think, that no one who is conversant with the civil wars, which raged when Anne of Austria held the French sceptre, would subscribe to such an opinion; as he must

find abundant proofs, in the history of that period,* to satisfy him, that the temporizing and vacillating character shewn by the honest part of the parliament, was solely attributable to the despotism which then prevailed in their government, in spite of all the generous efforts which they had made to temper it with a mixture of aristocracy and republicanism.

The character, indeed, of a nation, in an advanced period of civilization, may be said to depend almost entirely upon moral causes. The influence of government, for instance, upon manners and literature, cannot but be obvious to the most careless observer. Under the baneful sway of an arbitrary power, we look, in vain, for freedom of manners, and conversation, even in the most indifferent circumstances of life. The bulk of the people must there conform to the court-model. Its will must be to them, the only rule of right or wrong, since he who ventures to deviate from it, inevitably becomes the object of ministerial vengeance. A go-

* See *Memoires de Anne d'Austriche*, by Madame de Motteville, Tom. II.

vernment of this description will shew as despotic a controul in matters poetical, as political. When the zealous irascible spirit of Cardinal Richelieu had revenged itself on Corneille, by compelling the French academy to censure his immortal production, *The Cid*, instead of venturing to wage an open war with the Cardinal, the poet seems to be overwhelmed with terror and confusion at his proceedings, as we may gather from the following passage in his letter to M. de Boisrobert, the minister's favourite; "It is with the utmost impatience I look for the sentiments of the Academy, to determine the course which I may henceforth pursue; since, in the present interval, I cannot labour with any confidence, and dare not hazard any word, without trembling for my safety.*"

It was the established practice in the governments of Spain and Portugal, to prohibit the publication of any work, without its first having undergone six

* J'attends avec beaucoup d'impatience les sentimens de l'Academie afin d'apprendre ce que dorenavant je dois suivre. Jusques le se ne puis travailler qu'avec defiance et n'se employer un mot en seureté.—See P. Pelisson, *Histoire de l'Academie Françoise*.

or seven official reviews. The superior genius of Cervantes, Lope de Vega, or Camoens, might burst through all such obstructions in their road to fame; yet it will, assuredly, not be contended, that in those countries, where the Inquisition is appointed the sovereign arbiter of the fate of all candidates to literary glory, the people will discover the state abuses, or be encouraged to redress them, from the scope and tendency of their writings. As well, therefore, may we attribute the gloom and melancholy so observable among Spaniards, that foreigners have made it their distinguishing characteristic, to the influence of physical causes, and not to the tyrannic spirit of their municipal laws,* as to deny that sadness and melancholy are not associated with solitude, joy and pleasure with society; or that the decline of the frank and libertine wit of the old Roman comedy, was not chiefly owing to the studied and cautious manners which the artful policy of Augustus introduced, before he attempted to undermine the authority of the people.

* It must give every friend of civil liberty no small degree of satisfaction to reflect, that the above passages will be thought less applicable to the present state of Spain.

From these several observations, it will, then, appear, that we profess to belong to that sect, if we may be allowed this expression, who are disposed to circumscribe the influence of physical causes upon the political constitution of states, within very narrow limits. Man, in a state of barbarity, may be tutored, in some degree, by the elements; may be allowed, perhaps, to imbibe certain habits and dispositions, from the air he breathes, and the food he takes; but, when he emerges from the condition of a savage, and becomes familiarized to all the comforts and refinements of civil society, the connexion between genius and climate, we then suppose, ceases, or is felt only in the most remote degree. For, if we consult the page of historic truth, it will incontestibly prove to us,

“ Summos posse viros, et magna exempla duros,
 “ Vervicum in patria; crassoque subaere nasci.”*

Juvenal, Sat. X. Book 49, 50.

and that the poets of the north may aspire to as conspicuous a place in the annals of fame, as those

* It must give every friend of civil liberty no small degree of satisfaction to reflect, that the above passages will be thought less applicable to the present state of Spain.

of the south. Dante, Tasso, Ariosto, and Petrarch, are the pride and glory of the Italians; but let him pronounce who is capable of reading their works in the original, and those of Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, and Pope, whether our countrymen are not entitled to a higher tribute of admiration, than their rivals, on the same score of invention, a faculty which, unquestionably, holds the first place among the virtues of a poet. In a word, the difference between an ignorant and enlightened government, cannot be more strikingly exemplified, than in the various political institutions which the latter glories in resorting to, for counteracting any of the debasing influences of climate.

ESSAY VI.

Of the rapid Growth of Methodism.

WE have, of late, been in the habit of witnessing so many political convulsions, that those evils which do not instantly threaten to overwhelm us, excite no very lively sensations of alarm or indignation in our breasts. Else, before this time, a thousand orthodox pens would have filled every corner of this intellectual kingdom, with relations of the various evils and dangers to which the church and state were equally exposed, from the amazing increase of Methodism. An evil of so great and tremendous a nature, that, compared with it, the catholic emancipation shrinks into total insignificance.

Our curiosity, then, is naturally prompted to inquire, by what means a religious sect, in an age,

the characteristic of which is certainly not very favourable to the spirit of proselytism, should have made such rapid strides, within the short space of sixty years, as to number among its disciples, secret and avowed, seven hundred thousand people; composed, however, chiefly of the low and middle classes of the community. The term Methodist, we know, strictly speaking, can only be applied to the followers of Wesley* and Whitefield; but we have used it in a more extensive sense, and under that name designated all the *evangelical* dissenters, who form what has been emphatically called, "the combined armies against the church of England."

To this enquiry, we shall studiously endeavour to bring a mind, divested of all those prepossessions arising out of that reverence which we entertain for the consecrated servants of our faith; since it must be admitted, with regret, that this most serious and

* A fellow of Merton College first distinguished Mr. Wesley and his adherents by the appellation of Methodists, in allusion to an ancient college of physicians at Rome, who were remarkable for putting their patient under regimen, and were therefore called Methodists.—See Cooke's Life of Wesley,

important subject has been hitherto treated, with only one or two exceptions, in a tone too magisterial and virulent, to confer the slightest service upon the interests of true religion. After a careful examination, then, into the various causes of the increase of Methodism, we are inclined to think, that it has been chiefly promoted and diffused by the seven following:—1. The prejudices of the common people against episcopacy.—2. The Methodist doctrines of the immediate and perpetual interference of Providence, of experience, and justification by faith only.—3. Their class meetings.—4. Extemporaneous preaching.—5. Affected sanctity and austerity of manners.—6. The imperfect residence of the clergy of the established church.—7. The domestic irreligion of the great.

The history of modern Europe has demonstrated, that the ignorance and envy of the common people are sure sources of establishing erroneous opinions respecting religion. And, as it is not the peculiar boast of this country, that the understandings, even of the lowest members of society, are enlarged by all the aids of education, and by its

benign effects, or are exempt, in a remarkable degree, from the vice of envy, we are not then to be surprized, that the existence of those evils may be brought forward as one of the causes, which have afforded great facility to the Methodists, for prosecuting the vast designs which they have formed against the established church. To indispose the minds of men towards any institution, religious or civil, the most effectual way, we take it for granted, is, to exaggerate its abuses. How often, then, do we meet, in the publications of the Methodists, the insinuation, and, in the preachings, the avowal, although it be an article of their creed to write or to speak nothing against our church establishment, that bishops, in the plenitude of their wealth, their power, their dignity, their arrogance, lose all recollection of the apostolic mandate, "to be blameless, not greedy of filthy lucre, nor lifted up with pride and self-conceit;" and that, instead of cherishing the poor, and considering them as their brethren, they have no other object, but to amass, and to aggrandize their own family. Yet these accusations, the makers of which justly subject themselves to the weighty charge of wilfully viola-

ting the sacred obligations of truth, rarely fail to experience a most favourable reception, with beings whose mental faculties, for the want of cultivation, exceed but little the cattle which they drive.

We know it to be generally conceived, that it is not common to envy those, with whom we cannot easily be placed in comparison. The peasant, it may be justly imagined, would indulge in no animosity against the bishop, whose walk of life is so different to his. Yet, from crafty men ingrafting their own pernicious prejudices upon his ignorant and unsuspecting mind, he is taught to view the episcopal bench with as much ill-will, as if it had given him the most serious provocation to malice. This feeling of the common people, generally speaking, may be produced as a strong and conclusive proof of giving them the advantages of education; for though envy be a weed, that is more easily planted than plucked up, we are sanguine enough to believe, that, had the means of improving the understandings of the poor been more encouraged, it could never have been nurtured in their bosoms. Or, at least, the bulk of them, we trust, would then have

derived this important knowledge from being instructed in the art of reading, that difference of rank in the church was by God's own appointment, and, consequently, essential to the well-being of society; and though the high magistrates of the church could not be measured after the standard of those in the apostolical age, yet the difference lays more in a variation of modes and manners of life, than in any departure from the learning, charity, and benevolence, which characterized the saints of the primitive church.

In confirmation of this remark, we need only look to the valuable publications on matters of religion and morality, which have proceeded from the pens of so many of the reverend bench, and to their patronage and support of almost every charitable institution in the kingdom, for the laudable and public spirited use which they make of the greater part of their revenues. Reasoning from this last fact, the labourer and artizan would have seen through that detestable cant of hypocrisy which would persuade them, that it so deeply compassionated their state, as to hope the period would

come, when the whole of episcopal property might be confiscated for their benefit; but which, at the same time, could drain them of their last shilling, for the use of the Tabernacle. Can any rational being read, and not be filled with indignation and horror, at the dangerous influence gained over the minds of ignorant people, by these fanaticists, that a poor man with a family, earning *only twenty-eight shillings a week, had made two donations, of ten guineas each, to the missionary fund.** This total indifference to the first of all tender and social ties, in the case of this infatuated individual, forcibly reminds us of the methodistical exclamations of old Lady Lambeth, in the Hypocrite: "How has he weaned me from all temporal connections. My heart is now set upon nothing sublunary, and I thank Heaven, I am so insensible to every thing in this vain world, that I could see my son, my daughters, my brothers, my grandchildren, all expire before me, and mind it no more than the going out of so many snuffs of a candle."

* See the Evangelical Magazine for this extraordinary fact.

The clergyman of the established church but seldom dwells in his discourses upon the interference of Divine Providence in particular instances, unless they are closely interwoven with the downfall of empires, or any other revolution which may affect the happiness or misery of millions. Not that he affirms the universe to be ruled only by general laws, or denies the inspection and regard to terrestrial affairs, of Him, “who is about our path, and about our bed, and spieth out all our ways;” “without whom, not a sparrow falls to the ground, and with whom the very hairs of our head are all numbered.” He knows God to be omnipresent, all-wise, and all-powerful; capable of governing and directing all things upon earth, with equal ease, whether they be great or small. But that he thinks to insist upon the immediate interposition of his Almighty Power, upon every trifling occasion, would lead to the adoption of opinions, repugnant to his moral justice, and, therefore, to true piety.

The methodist preacher, however, shuts his ears against this sort of reasoning. What enlightened minds have considered as the innocent amusements of

a leisure hour, his gloomy soul turns from with as much pious horror, as if they were polluted with the stain of idolatry. Nay, God's avenging providence, if we listen to his narrations, would seem to follow those indulgences. In the Evangelical Magazine, which seems to be established for no other purpose but the admission of the most extravagant fictions of the *children of light and grace*, the *dear people*, the *elect*, the *people of God*, the pharasaical names by which the votaries of Methodism distinguish themselves from the rest of mankind, we are instructed to believe, that a clergyman, for committing the heinous sin of playing a game of cards, was punished by instant death. "And it is worthy of remark," says the writer, "that, within a very few years, this was the third character in the neighbourhood, which had been summoned from the card-table to the bar of God."

We read, also, in the Methodists' Magazine, that to the justice of offended Heaven, one of their preachers, before his conversion, ascribes the accident of dislocating his shoulder, to partaking of the healthy exercise of dancing. Let us take, also,

the following instance, from among many others equally satisfactory and important, of the encouragement which the Deity gave to the Father of Methodism (need I add the name of Wesley), to proceed in his evangelical undertaking: "My horse was exceedingly lame, we could not discern what it was that was amiss, and yet he could scarce set his foot on the ground. My head ached more than it had done for some months (what I here aver is the naked fact, let every man account for it as he sees good); I then thought, cannot God heal either man or beast, by any means, or *without any!* immediately my weariness and head-ache ceased, and my horse's lameness in the same instant. Nor did he halt any more, either that day or the next."* Ab hoc uno disce omnes.

But whoever expects to read of the interests of Methodism being materially advanced, without any miraculous interposition, will be woefully disappointed. All sorts of disorders, acute as well as chronical, disappeared on the approach of their

* See Journal from July 20, 1735, to October 28, 1754, p. 10.

founder; and a close and impartial investigation of his journal, warrants us in concluding, that he principally founded his pretensions to the character of a saint and apostle, from the numerous, pointed, and particular proofs of the divine approbation, which he affirms were shewn to him in the course of his ministry. Conformably, then, to the belief, that the seal of Heaven was set to the truth of Mr. Wesley's mission, his infatuated and ambitious biographer,* Dr. Coke, in opposition to every dictate of common sense, and to every restraint of common shame, scruples not to tell us, that when his preaching was interrupted by the clamour and violence of a London mob, it was the declaration

* Without the influence, the name and even office of a bishop seems to have been inadequate to the aspiring views of this fierce sectary.—See Nightingale's *Portraiture of Methodism*, p. 402, 406. Whoever finds himself hovering on the brink of Methodism, we would seriously exhort to peruse his work, from which most of the facts stated in this Essay are taken. The impulse of an ardent mind seems to have urged the author of it to become one of the evangelical preachers, before his reasoning faculties had attained their full maturity. In that character, however, he has been enabled to divulge most of the “secrets of the prison-house,” and justice requires, and truth permits us to add, *that none but the bigot and enthusiast can complain of his partiality.*—See his *Life of Wesley*, p. 246.

of Sir John Ganson, and the other Middlesex magistrates, that they had orders *from above* to do him justice, whenever he applied to them.

There are some men who would depreciate the highest excellencies of Christianity, if they could be depreciated, by the manner in which they attempt to set them forth. And, among this number, may be surely reckoned that man, who could seek to twist such an influence from an expression, which could have no other meaning, but that the king would not permit any of his subjects to be persecuted on account of their religion. In many instances, it is extremely difficult to distinguish between the delusions of enthusiasm, and the artifices of imposture; but here the traces of the latter are marked so plain, as to preclude the possibility of mistake.

From the foregoing facts, it must be now sufficiently evident, that this doctrine of the immediate and perpetual interference of Providence, has effectually contributed to the increase of Methodism. It cannot, then, excite our astonishment, that the

Methodist preacher should disdain having recourse to the mild arts of persuasion and reasoning, or what he terms *head knowledge*, for the purpose of calling sinners to repentance; when this doctrine presents him with the means of adopting such a quick and efficacious mode for their conversion. How flat and unprofitable are all appeals to the sense and reason of mankind, in competition with a doctrine which, like this, so forcibly addresses itself to the strongest of the passions, which announces instant death to the players of whist, and dislocated shoulders to the lovers of dancing. Is this not alone sufficient to shake the stability of our established pulpits, from whence we are never assailed with the fears of such punishments, for such gigantic crimes; but, in their place, we hear such gross and pernicious mistakes as the following:—That there is a Providence which controuls all human events, and oftentimes brings good out of evil, but that it would clash with some of the moral attributes of the Deity, to believe he would condescend to be continually occupied with our little concerns. To another world we must look, then, for the correction of all the apparent irregularities of the present system;

where, the good will receive their due reward, and the wicked their due punishment. "Let not thine heart envy sinners; but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off."—*Prov.* xxiii. 17, 18. Such are the irrational and impious notions of these *dumb* dogs*, the *christian epithet* applied' by the evangelical teachers to the clergy of the church of England. No wonder, then, that our pastors should incur the severe censure and reprobation of men, so renowned for superiority of learning, and liberality of sentiments, as the Methodists are admitted to be both by friends and foes.

The second doctrine by which the Methodists have so widely diffused their faith, is the doctrine

* No person, among the Methodists, shall call another heretic, bigot, or any other disrespectful name, on any account, for difference of sentiment. See the fourth clause in the twenty-ninth section of the General Minister, cited by Nightingale, p. 263. From the *scrupulous* manner in which the preachers of the Tabernacle adhere to this rule, the difference between their souls and those of the established clergy of England, may be easily estimated.

of inward impulse or emotions, or, as they term it, *experience*; which certainly does not require any minute discussion, or profound remarks, to shew, if preached among the low and simple, must engender in them the most excessive superstition, or interested cunning. For, if credulous and ignorant men are taught to ascribe every internal feeling to the immediate agency of the Supreme Being, there can be little doubt but that those who embrace this doctrine, are apt to fall into the vice of rashness, and enthusiasm; to mistake phrenzy for illumination, and the delusion of a distempered brain for the impulse of the Spirit. The line of demarcation here, indeed, is so small between the regions of enthusiasm and madness, as to be almost imperceptible.

During the meeting of a love-feast,* it is usual for men and women to communicate their *sweet experiences*. "I remember," says the author of the *Portraiture of Methodism*, "when I first attended

* We are told, that Mr. Wesley borrowed the practice of holding the *Agapæ*, or *feasts of love*, from the Moravian brethren.—See Nightingale, p. 201.

one of these meetings, I thought, surely, a new species of beings had come among us, in the form of men, to tell what was passing in the realms of light, and in the regions of darkness." The preacher first opens the imposing scene, by relating his own experience to the congregation. When he has astonished his then mute and immoveable auditors, with a full account of his apostacy from the christian faith, to the *first drawings of the Spirit*, another "dreamer of dreams" then rises, to tell what the Lord has done for his soul. Sometimes the effects of a decent education, or a sense of modesty, will occasion a young female, in reciting her trials, temptations, backslidings, conversion, present feelings, and future resolutions, to this assembly of enthusiasts, to betray that sort of perplexity which may be interpreted into reluctance to approve this public confession, and yet into a terror not to make it.

Αἰδέθεν μὲν ἀνήναθαι, δεῖσαν δὲ ὑποδεχθαι.

Iliad, Lib. vii. v 93.

In such a situation, the feelings of the hesitating female must be of the most agonizing kind; for it

is the unanimous sentiment of those, who have obtained to christian perfection, and entire sanctification, that this unwillingness is solely to be attributed to the influence of the devil. It is but rare, however, that instances of this kind occur. In general, the votaries of the Tabernacle discover such eagerness to announce the miraculous circumstances which led to their separation from the *carnal people, the people of this world*, that, from their frequent practice of rising at the same time, the preacher is often called upon to determine who shall have the precedence.

Of the nature of the confessions that take place at the meeting of *the select bands*, we are not permitted to speak. Since they are as closely guarded, as the secrets of free-masonry. We may, however, suppose them to be of the most edifying kind, as we are told, that these bands consist only of members who have attained to what is called a state of perfection, or, in other words, those who never, *on any account, or any occasion, or temptation whatsoever, commit the slightest sin, in thought, word, or deed.* It is somewhere recorded of Augustus

Cæsar, that, after a long and diligent enquiry into every part of his immense empire, he found but one man who was reputed never to have uttered a falsehood. Upon which account he was deemed worthy to be appointed chief sacrificer in the Temple of Truth. Now we would as readily believe, that the Emperor found whole provinces populated with beings, who never spoke an untruth, upon any occasion whatsoever, as the real existence of the foregoing perfections among the select bands. What! shall we infants in goodness,* but giants in sin, impiously dare to affirm that, in this dissolute age, are to be found among us those, in whom every religious and social perfection is blended; when the wisest and best are full of spots and blemishes, and when such is the incurable frailty of human nature, that even

* The methodists are in the constant habit of making triumphant appeals to the Bible, as they conceive, for the justification of their faith and practice. Let them try the experiment in the following instance, and they will find many such sentences to this effect: "For there is no man that sinneth not."—1 Kings. "If thou, Lord, should mark iniquities, who should stand."—Psalm cxxx. 3. We had hitherto understood, that the necessity of a Redeemer was solely founded upon this universal depravity of mankind, and consequent liability to punishment.

he* upon whom the Holy Ghost, as the spirit and guide of truth, had descended, could not even then conduct himself so as to be free of the slightest sin; in thought, word, or deed. Moderation towards those who differ from us in religious opinions; is a feeling highly amiable, and cannot be too assiduously cultivated. Yet, if ever there was an occasion to justify a departure from it, it is surely against a sect, whose religion is fanaticism, and whose arrogant claims to the real practice of superior piety and virtue, may be with as much justice disputed, as that scheme of Doctor Darwin's to uncommon sagacity, which proposed to mend the climates of the frigid and torrid zones, by towing ice islands from the pole to the equator, and of regulating the winds by means of chemical mixtures. The following passage in that first of French come-

* We allude to the fallibility, or rather to the gross prevarication of St. Peter, who, for fear of offending the Jews, withdrew himself from the Gentiles, as if it had been unlawful for him to hold conversation with uncircumcised persons; notwithstanding he knew, and was fully satisfied, that his divine Master had broken down the wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentile. "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed."—See St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, chap. ii. 11.

dies, *Le Tartuffe*, so finely points out the distinction between hypocrisy and devotion, and is here so particularly applicable, that the reader of discernment will overlook its length, for the noble zeal with which it pleads the cause of true religion,

Il est de faux devots, ainsi que de faux braves,
 Et comme on ne voit pas qu' a l'honneur les conduit,
 Les vrais braves, soient ceux qui font beaucoup bruit,
 Les bons et vrais devots, qu'on doit suivre à la trace,
 Ne sont pas ceux aussi qui font tant de grimace.
 Hé quoi ! Vous ne ferez nulle distinction
 Entre l'hypocrisie, et la devotion ?
 Vous les voulez traiter d'un semblable langage,
 Et rendre même honneur au masque qu' au visage,
 Egaler l'artifice à la sincérité,
 Confondre l'apparence avec la vérité,
 Et la le fantôme autant que la personne,
 Et la fausse monnoye, à l'égal de la bonne ?
 Les hommes, la plupart, sont étrangement faits,
 Dans la juste nature on ne les voit jamais.
 La raison a pour eux, des bornes, trop petites,
 En chaque caractere ils passent ses limites,
 Et la plus noble chose, ils la gatent souvent,
 Pour la vouloir outrer et pousser trop avant."

The third doctrine which calls for notice among the methodists, is that of justification *by faith alone*. A doctrine, which Mr. Wesley had imbibed from his Moravian brethren, and insisted upon with such vehemence, during the whole of his subsequent

life; and which, his followers, unremittingly labour to prove our clergy have wilfully neglected, and deserted, because they do not constantly press it upon our attention in their discourses. We will say, then, a few words respecting the historical part of this doctrine, before we attempt to shew its mischievous tendency in the hands of such people as the methodists.

In our first general separation from the church of Rome, the immoderate zeal of some well-meaning but mistaken divines, had pushed the doctrine of justification by faith alone, even to a height of extravagance, under the notion of providing an antidote for the poison which they conceived was instilled by the papal doctrine of merits. And it is well known, that the puritans in the civil wars, carried this above-mentioned doctrine into a dangerous and impure antinomianism; since it suited their crafty purposes, first to depreciate morality, and then to dispense with it. When, however, monarchy was restored, the church of England, to prevent, as far as lay in its power, the Gospel principle of Faith being again abused, wisely endea-

voured to restore morality to its injured rights. Accordingly, the most eminent divines of that day never failed to preach up morality, as forming no less an essential part of the christian system than the gospel principle of faith. The effects of their discourse were soon apparent in the conduct of the people. Taught by these truly learned and pious men, the duties which they owed to God, to themselves, and to society, the flame of fanaticism no longer burnt in their breasts, and they became once more satisfied, and obedient, laborious, sober christians. Such was the unequivocal good imparted to the nation at large, by these divines, who, because they taught their auditors to seek their way to Heaven by acts of charity, as well as by high professions of faith, received from the zealots of the times, the inappropriate name of *latitudinarians*.

But since Methodism has reared her ugly head, the doctrine of practical righteousness is utterly out of fashion among the greater part of the lower orders of the community. Now what an irreparable calamity this circumstance alone, of insisting upon the necessity of faith, and not of good

works, may produce to this country at a future period, if this sect should grow with its growth, and strengthen with its strength, is for wiser heads to predict. Perhaps, we may here be told, that in preaching faith, the Methodists preach, at the same time, good works, since the one cannot possibly exist without the other. Not so, however, is the conclusion of their infallible oracle, Mr. Wesley, and, therefore, we may presume to add, not their's also. But that we may avoid the imputation, as well as the danger, of misrepresenting his opinion upon this important subject, we shall give it in his own words:—*True religion does not consist in any, or all these three things, the living harmless, using the means of grace, and doing much good. A man may do all this, and yet have no true religion.** Yet, until our eyes had met with this declaration of the modern St. Paul,† we had foolishly enough conceived, “that pure or true religion, and unde-

* See Journal, from November 14th, 1739, to September 30th, 1741, p. 11, 12.

† An appellation by no means displeasing to those in the Wesleyian connection.

filed before God, and the Father, is this: to visit the fatherless, and widow, in their afflictions, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”* And such, hitherto, has been our heathen ignorance, (for our readers, no more than ourselves, must flatter themselves that they have any real pretensions to the name of christians, unless *they have been called to a knowledge of Christ, under a sermon of Mr. Wesley’s, or his followers;*)† that whenever our spiritual pastors, appointed by law, have exhorted us to remember, that faith without works, would not secure the possession of eternal happiness, we had imagined, they equally inculcated the precepts of morality, and of the Gospel:‡ “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or a sister be naked, and destitute of daily

* St. James’ Epistle, chap. i. v. 27.

† See Evangelical Magazine, p. 176, for an account of Mr. Robinson’s being first admitted into the church of Christ, under a sermon by Mr. Venn. See likewise this Magazine, p. 380, for the introduction of Christianity into the parish of Launton, near Bicester, in the year 1807.

‡ St. James’ Epistle, chap. xi. v. 14—17.

food, and one of you say unto them, depárt in peace, be you warmed and filled. Notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."

Upon so important a branch of the methodistical hierarchy, as that of class meetings is, the reader will look, perhaps, for that sort of detail, which will serve more to satisfy, than to excite his curiosity: That he may not, then, be entirely disappointed in that expectation, we shall lay before him some account of the origin of them, before we proceed to enter into a survey of their present nature and objects.

The origin of class meetings was instituted at first with a view to effect only a temporary purpose; but the substantial benefits which they imparted, soon made them common throughout the whole connection. "I was talking," says the father of methodism, "with several of the society in Bristol, concerning the means of paying the debts there (which had been incurred by building, &c.), when

one stood up, and said, Let every member of the society give a penny a week, till all are paid. Another answered, But many of them are poor, and cannot afford to do it.—Then, said he, put eleven of the poorest with me, and if they can give any thing, well; I will call on them weekly, and if they can give nothing, then I will give for them as well as for myself; and each of you call on eleven of your neighbours weekly; receive what they give, and make up what is wanting! It was done. In a while, some of these informed me, they found such and such a one did not live as he ought! It struck me immediately, this is the thing, the very thing, we have wanted so long.” For the reader is here to learn, that, before this plan had been suggested, Mr. Wesley’s sharp-sighted eyes had spied out that some wolves had crept into his flock, or, in other words, there were a few, *mirabile dictu*, who happened not to be quite animated with a zeal like his, for the support and propagation of the true faith. This plan, therefore, presented a most favourable opportunity, which Mr. Wesley had long ardently sought, but hitherto sought in vain, of getting rid of men, whose lukewarmness he was

at times apprehensive might even communicate itself to those, who most faithfully executed his mandates, and imitated his example. For lukewarmness was ever contemplated by him with more horror, than opposition. He that is not with me, is against me, said the scourge of Europe to the Elector of Saxony, when he wished to be ranked by him as a neutral power. And upon that point Buonaparte, and the warrior of God, seem to have been of the same opinion. But to finish our extract—

“Accordingly,” proceeds the saint, “I called together all the leaders of the classes (as we used to term them, and their companies), and desired, that each would make a particular inquiry into the behaviour of those whom he saw weekly. They did so. Many disorderly walkers were detected. Some turned from the evil of their ways, some were put away from us. Many saw it with fear, and rejoiced unto God with reverence. As soon as possible, the same method was used in London, and all other places. Evil men were detected and re-proved. They were borne with for a season. If

they forsook their sins, we received them gladly ; if they obstinately persisted therein, it was openly declared, that they were not of us. The rest mourned, and prayed for them, and yet rejoiced, that as far as in us lay, the scandal was rolled away from the society." Such was the rise of class-meetings. And as Mr. Wesley's disciples were fully persuaded that he was born for no other purpose, but the spiritual happiness of the whole world, whenever, therefore, he spake, it was done ; whatever he commanded, stood fast.

The fair sex now compose a part of the class-meeting of the present day. Like the female quaker overseers, they take charge of their own sex only. But as men and women are generally associated together upon this occasion, the leader is, of course, a brother. Prayer and singing being concluded, he proceeds to arrest their attention by a circumstantial account of his conflicts with the world, the flesh, and the devil, during the preceding week. And his experience is generally terminated with the assurance, that the ruling passion of his soul is the desire of walking closely with Christ. " After all,

my dear brethren, I still find a determination in my own soul, to press forward for the mark of the prize of my high calling of God, in Christ Jesus. He is still precious. His word is as ointment poured forth. After all my short comings, my doubts, and anxieties, my wanderings, weakness, and weariness, his Spirit still whispers to my heart—Thou art black, but comely. Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it. Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like a rose, or to a young hart upon the mountains of spice! So I still may say to my sweet Jesus,

“ I hold thee with a trembling hand,
 “ And will not let thee go.”

After this peroration, the next step in the pious business of the evening, is for the leader to make a categorical enquiry into the state of every soul present. A mode of proceeding which, in our humble apprehensions, is attended with far more injurious consequences, than was ever occasioned among us, by that relict of papal superstition, auricular confession. But the methodists are so spotless, so exercised in the habits of chastity, and in all their

institutions, the traces of perfect wisdom are so discoverable, that nothing but the ignorance of malice, or of infidelity, could affect to believe those confessions were so far from inspiring the love of truth, modesty, and all the other moral virtues, that they very often produced, especially among the women, effects, which the real friends of christianity would blush to mention. The aid of vocal music is then summoned; and in such hymns as the following, the languishing spirit of devotion is raised up to a pitch of enthusiasm, which none but the enemies of our religion could possibly insult and ridicule.

A MOURNER BROUGHT TO THE BIRTH.

“ I’ll weary thee with my complaints,
 “ Here at thy feet for ever lie,
 “ With longing sick, with groaning faint,
 “ O give me love, or else I die.”

REJOICING.

“ My God, I am thine ! What a comfort divine !
 “ What a blessing to know, that my Jêsus is mine !
 “ In the heavenly Lamb, thrice happy I am ;
 “ And my heart it doth dance at the sound of his name.

" True pleasures abound in the rapturous sound,
 " And whoever hath found it, hath paradise found ;
 " My Jesus to know, and feel his blood flow,
 " 'Tis life everlasting, 'tis heaven below.

" Yet onward I haste to the heavenly feast,
 " That, that is the fulness ! but this is the taste ;
 " And this I shall prove, till with joy I remove,
 " To the heaven of heavens, in Jesus's love !"

" Ah ! why did I so late thee know,
 " Thee, lovelier than the sons of men ?
 " Ah ! why did I no sooner go,
 " To thee, the only ease in pain ?
 " Ashamed I sigh, and only mourn,
 " That I so late to thee did turn."

A BELIEVER GROANING FOR FULL REDEMPTION.

" Lo ! on dangers, deaths, and snares,
 " I every moment tread ;
 " Hell without a veil appears,
 " And flames around my head.

" Sin increases more and more,
 " Sin in all its strength returns,
 " Seven times hotter than before,
 " The fiery furnace burns.

" Sin in me the inbred foe,
 " A while subsists in chains ;
 " But thou all my power shalt shew,
 " And slay its last remains.

"Thou hast conquered my desire,
 "Thou shalt quench it with thy blood;
 "Fill me with a purer fire,
 "And make me all like God."

"O love! I languish at thy stay!
 "I pine for thee with lingering smart!
 "Weary and faint, through long delay,
 "When wilt thou come into my heart?
 "From sin and sorrow set me free,
 "And swallow up my soul in thee!"

Under the impression of these pious songs, devotion kindles into one strong and prevailing passion of enthusiasm. The uncontroverted, or those who labour in the pangs of the new birth, and those who are groaning for full redemption, then feel in themselves that particular disposition of mind, which prompts them to give a free vent to the soft meltings of the heart. In short, every circumstance here is admirably fitted to prevent members from sinking into listlessness, and not less adapted for the purposes of conversion. Yet the rational advocate for the establishment, who views this meeting with an unprejudiced eye, sees nothing in it but a pretended zeal for religion, mixed

with the wildest extravagances of error, and cannot, therefore, be surprized at the number of ignorant persons flocking to the standard of methodism, so long as a class-meeting exists, to encourage the wanderings of the fancy, and the visions of fanaticism.

In enumerating the causes, which have assisted the influence of methodism, it might be justly regarded as an unpardonable omission, were we only slightly to mention the extemporaneous preaching of its ministers. Since, we will venture to say, that here they have attacked the church on the side in which it is most vulnerable. It will not be denied, that the bulk of mankind are affected mostly by externals. It is not the matter of a discourse, but the manner of its delivery, which is calculated to make an impression upon their senses. The very ungraceful way, then, in which the generality of the clergy of the establishment deliver their sermons, may safely be pronounced to be one of the reasons for the people deserting the church, for the conventicle.

But energy in the pulpit is stigmatized by the degrading epithets of foppish, and theatrical. It is not orthodox to be animated in speaking of the nature and attributes of God; or of his blessed Son, the friend and saviour of mankind, who came down from Heaven to rescue us from sin and death. What! shall the senator, in the mere support of a turnpike bill, and the lawyer, in discussing a dry legal point, express warm feelings as much by their face, and gesticulation, as by their voice; and shall the servants of the Most High, in descanting upon such sublime topics as those we have just now mentioned, be still distinguished for their inanimate elocution? The great secret, says Quintilian,* of moving the passions, is to be moved ourselves. But how is it to be expected, that piety should grow warm, when most of our clergy pray and preach as if they were repeating words, instead of inculcating sentiments; when they suffer one dull monotony to pervade every period of their discourse, for fear of being styled theatrical and affected? Let

* Summa enim circa movendos affectus in hoc posita est, ut moveamur ipsi.—Lib. VI. Chap. II.

those who consider it almost a species of heresy to arouse the attention, and engage the heart by the genuine look and voice of passion, only cast their eyes upon the number of schismatics, who have departed from the orthodox faith, and then determine whether tame or animated pastors, have most contributed to the honour and increase of the church. Such powerful effects may be traced, even from the appearance of being in earnest in the pulpit, that we are fully persuaded, if the generality of the methodists did not mistake rant for energy, instead of drawing after them the low and middle orders of society, we should see their folly and imposition countenanced even by persons of rank and fashion. Whitfield surely would not have numbered among his auditors, a Chesterfield and a Bolingbroke, if he had owed his celebrity as a preacher, entirely to stage trick, and extravagant grimace.

If, then, that pillar of Calvinian Methodism should have succeeded in making more converts by the graces of his delivery, than by his doctrines, how just a matter is it of regret, to all who regard

the establishment with the most friendly eye, that so many of its clergy, from the sole dread of being denominated popular preachers, should still afford some just ground for wits and libertines to call their churches public dormitories; when the greater part of them possess knowledge and abilities sufficient to render the most essential service to truth, virtue, and religion. For it is not, we contend, the rhapsodical nonsense* which the methodist preachers pour forth, for one or two hours, without the assistance of book, or paper, and the consequent notion among the ignorant, that God's spirit resides in them, and speaks from their mouth; no; nor it is not the fulminations which these ecclesiastical mountebanks let fly, without mercy or prudence, of eternal tortures to the lukewarm, and wavering, nor that disgusting bitterness of spirit, which leads them to deal damnation around the land, that half so much has brought over the multitude to their

* To such as are unwilling hearers of it, we would wish to call to their remembrance the following consolatory couplet, of Mr. Herbert, of pious memory.—

————— If all wants sense,
God takes a text, and preacheth patience.

party, as the fervour and animation with which their perfect cant is delivered.*

As the methodists are, in as full a degree, possessed with the spirit of proselytism, as the Roman Catholics ever were, and this mischievous zeal

* In a printed sermon of Mr. Adam Clark's, a man of great authority, we believe, among the methodists, and certainly deemed by them of great talents, the following expressions, we suppose, are designed at once to terrify, and subdue into an implicit obedience, those whose vices, or, we should rather say, frailties, have been considered by the preacher to affect the character of the society.—“A damned spirit.—A devil damned in the abyss of perdition, in the burning pool which spouts cataracts of fire!—Sinners may lose their time in disputing against the *reality* of hell-fire, till awakened to a sense of their folly, by finding themselves plunged into what God calls the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.—Many are desirous of seeing an inhabitant of the other world, or they wish to *converse* with one, to know what passes there; curiosity and infidelity are as insatiable as they are unreasonable. Here, however, God steps out of the common way to indulge them. You wish to see a disembodied spirit! Make way! Here is a damned soul, which Christ has waked from the hell of fire! Hear him! Hear him tell of his torments! Hear him utter his anguish! Listen to the sighs and groans, which are wrung from his soul by the torture he endures! Hear him asking for a drop of water, to cool his burning tongue! Telling you, that he is tormented in that flame, and warning you to repent, that you may come not into that place of torture! How solemn is this warning! How awful this voice.—Hear the groans of this damned soul, and be alarmed!”

in them, we may remark, by the way, wants even the wretched plea of the former, namely, the belief of the infallibility of their church; they soon found, that to rivet firmly the bonds of subjection on the multitude, which their preaching had first imposed, it was also necessary that their lives should assume the appearance of the most rigid sanctity. Agreeably to this notion, the following questions, among many others, are proposed to the candidate for their ministry. “Do you enjoy a clear manifestation of the love of God to your soul?—Have you constant power over all sin?—Are you determined to employ all your time in the work of God?”

In this last question, the secret dread which the methodists entertain of all human learning, is sufficiently evident to the most careless observer. The acquisition of knowledge is, indeed, always fatal to the reign of fanaticism and superstition. Mr. Wesley was, therefore, perfectly right in not making his lay preachers, scholars, as he was well aware, that the improvement of their understandings by reading and reflection, would, sooner or later, lead

them to discover, that there were as many false zealots in religion, as false patriots in politics. But, perhaps, it would be more respectful to those friends of the dear Redeemer* to conclude, that they would be far from holding in utter contempt all knowledge which was not useful to salvation, unless they had received an especial communication *from above*, that poetry offered nothing but false or common thoughts, expressed in an artificial style; history, doubts and uncertainties; physics, darkness; morality, obvious truths, or dangerous paradoxes; and metaphysics, vain and frivolous subtleties.

If, then, these inspired teachers of the Gospel are instructed to despise the erudition of this world; its pleasures, we may, of course expect to find entitled to a large share of their detestation. Balls, plays, and every species of public spectacles, are considered as so many temptations to divert us from the path of holiness, in the judgment of these

* For the free use of this familiar and irreverent expression, in the Evangelical Magazine, p. 268, see an account of the religious hoy, which sets off every week for Margate.

severe reformers—"Dancing is not fit for a being, who is preparing himself for eternity;" and the play-house is characterized as the habitation of the devil.

Mr. Wilberforce, the great advocate for the methodists, is pleased to say, "that even when moral principles are inculcated on the stage, they are not such as a christian ought to cherish in his bosom, but such as must be his daily endeavour to extirpate; not those which Scripture warrants, but those which it condemns; as false and spurious, being founded in pride and ambition, and the over-valuation of human favour."* In a former Essay, an opportunity presented itself, of which we cheerfully availed ourselves, to offer our tribute of respect to the public character of this gentleman, while, as a writer upon the important subject of religion, we have no hesitation to say, that even his faults are derived from an excess of virtue. This declaration will then, or ought, to satisfy the most suspicious,

* See a practical view of the prevailing religious system of professed Christians, p. 306.

that our objections to this most objectionable sentence, must not be hastily and indiscriminately ascribed to any undue partiality for theatrical* amusements, but to a persuasion, that the spiritual zeal of the author has hurried him, in this instance, even beyond the bounds of truth and benevolence. For, surely, he will not assert, that all the precepts and axioms delivered by the genius of a Shakspeare, in those productions which will instruct and delight, and, we had almost dared to add, edify the most distant ages, are calculated to bring piety into disgrace.

Many pieces are still tolerated, we grant, in which we are at a loss to recognize the propriety of denominating the stage, the school of morals and delicacy, and which would justify the stern expression of St. Augustin, † “that theatrical performances are the blemishes of nature, the plague of reason, and

* It would be difficult even for Mr. Wilberforce to shew, that all the sentiments expressed by Portia, in the Merchant of Venice, and the Duke and Isabella, in Measure for Measure, are such as a Christian ought not to cherish in his bosom.

† See De Civitate Dei, Lib. I. Chap. XXXI.

the ruin of virtue." We are sensible, also, that a moral sentence, tacked to the end of a play abounding in licentious images, is calculated to do no more good, than a pious expression, which drops from the mouth of a dying man, whose whole life has been one uninterrupted scene of wickedness.

But though this be admitted, and a great deal more, yet the shutting up our theatres would not a jot advance the spiritual interests, either of the lower and higher classes of society; since the former would spend those hours at the ale-house, which could not be passed at the theatre; and the latter, be immersed more than ever, in a round of folly and dissipation. The moral character of no people is solely formed by precepts; we may discourse very wisely about the beauty of virtue, and the deformity of vice, yet fail exciting even the attention of our audience, much less "to open the sacred source of sympathetic tears." Whereas, let those qualities be outraged on the stage, and our best feelings will be most powerfully affected. Whatever, therefore, contributes to inspire us with virtuous sentiments, and this the stage does, we contend, with all its

defects, though its practical influence may not be very lasting, is, surely, not then to be regarded as a "proof of our defective love of God." At least, we believe, such is not the conclusion of the bulk of nominal christians, or, in other words, those who are not illuminated by a single ray of the light of methodism,

The pious indignation of methodist preachers is not more excited by theatrical entertainments, than by gay apparel, and sumptuous living. But in censuring such things, the profane may be tempted to suspect, that whatever fortune has placed beyond their reach, is certain of incurring their hatred. It is, indeed, no sign of a very elevated mind, to substitute railing for reasoning, as they do, in speaking of all articles of luxury. But this conduct, it must be acknowledged, is very consistent in men who despise, or affect to despise, every enjoyment which is not of a spiritual nature. The reader will not, then, be astonished to hear, that those who are ambitious of superior sanctity, and who vainly aspire to "be all fair," to have no spot in them, consider, that the most certain way to

conciliate the good-will of God, in an eminent degree, is to renounce the delightful freedom of social intercourse, and to regard all trifling levity of discourse as a criminal abuse of the gift of speech. Active virtues, with them, are destitute of any value, or efficacy, when put in competition with the merit of incessant prayer, which we have heard wise men call incessant indolence;* since the love of action is a principle interwoven, as it were, in our constitution; and the chief use of prayer is to implore the divine favour to our actions. We may push the observation still further, upon the bad effects of incessant praying, by concluding, that it gradually and insensibly leads him who practises it into a presumptuous belief, that God has selected

* Incessant praying might also be called excessive ignorance. For surely none but the most deluded enthusiast can expect to attain to an intimate acquaintance with God, by prayer without study. "Let no one," says that profound philosopher and devout christian, Lord Bacon, "weakly imagine, that men can search too far, or be too well studied in the book of God's *words* and *works*, divinity and philosophy; but rather let them endeavour an endless progression in both; only applying all to charity, and not to pride; to use, not ostentation; without confounding the two different streams of philosophy and revelation together."

—See Vol. I. p. 18, Shawe's edition.

him as an instrument to instruct and reform mankind: till, at last, fanaticism has firmly established her dominion over his mind. It is related by Dionysius Halicarnassensis, that the first Romans, in order to prevent theological enthusiasm, enacted that no one should be admitted into the sacerdotal office, before he had accomplished his fiftieth year. If none became methodist preachers before they had arrived at that age, we will venture to pronounce, that the true object of devotion, and the true spirit of it, would not now be utterly lost, as it is among them, in the futile and absurd opinion, that they alone are the distinguished favourites of the Father of the universe.

It will be no digression to conclude this part of our subject with describing one of the many ways, by which the number of methodists is augmented. To diffuse the faith of Mr. Wesley, by every means in his power, is part of the sacred duty of a prayer leader, or exhorter. Accordingly, whenever he and his party come to a place, where methodism is embraced by none, or a few only, it is the business of one of his associates, who is fond of smoking,

to call at some house, and to request the liberty of lighting his pipe. A denial rarely accompanies such a trifling request, and the stranger is also, of course, often asked to take a chair, and to rest himself, while he lights his pipe.

An opportunity is then given him to introduce his brethren, who are stationed close to the house, by saying, he should be happy to accept their offer, but that his friends are in waiting for him at the door. An invitation being made to them, the work of salvation commences, by some one of the party looking round to espy if there be any religious books on the tables or desks. In short, few minutes are suffered to elapse, before the subject of religion is started, in some way or other; and, if these missionaries be favourably heard, the banners of methodism are soon displayed in the village. A prayer meeting is begun at the house; and the next step in the business of conversion, is the appointment of local preachers, whose successes pave the way in due order for the admission of their travelling brethren, when a liberal effusion of the Spirit is the glorious consequence.

The imperfect residence of the established clergy, we are inclined to think, may be safely added to those causes, which have contributed in a very considerable degree to the progress of methodism. But, in laying down this position, let us not be classed among those, whose excessive zeal for personal residence, has led them to adopt the erroneous opinion, circulated by the enemies of the church, that the absolute desertion of the clerical office is a thing by no means comparatively rare. That most men, when not resident upon their own livings, are employed as curates to others, every well-informed advocate for the revival of the statute of Henry VIII. must be very ready to acknowledge; but it certainly does not follow, that the clergyman who is connected with his parishioners only by a temporary or precarious tie, does the same good as he who invariably executes the duties of his own parish. The cardinal virtue of residence, if we may so express ourselves, we take, then, to be the increase of moral and religious instruction among the lower order of the people, and even the harsh interference of legislative authority may, perhaps, be justified

to effect so desirable an end. It must be abundantly clear to all, that resident curates, generally speaking, are not very remarkable for their professional activity. If they regularly perform the ordinary offices of the church, give an hour every Sunday in the year for pulpit exhortations, and answer the common occasional calls of parochial duty, it seldom enters their heads, that they have not discharged all their spiritual functions. The wretched pittance, indeed, which most of them receive, so ill-calculated to maintain even a distant appearance to the state of a gentleman, in these expensive times, and the consideration, that they may toil all their life for the public benefit, without advancing one step in the ladder of preferment, are but weak inducements, we must confess, to any gratuitous efforts for the instruction of their fellow creatures. Circumstances, unquestionably painful and humbling, in every point of view, to the individuals to whom they may happen, yet serving forcibly to point out the necessity of personal residence, for the keeping alive a due sense of religion in a parish,

Now, on the other hand, a resident incumbent, if the qualifications of his heart be equal to those of his head, is naturally impelled, from a variety of motives, to seek the promotion of the spiritual interests of his flock, by the different means of inspection and remonstrance. The cure of souls with him, is a charge of no small responsibility. The command of St. Paul to Timothy, to "be instant in season, and out of season," is constantly fresh in his remembrance. He considers it, therefore, as essential a part of his duty as preaching, to lose no favourable opportunity of cultivating a friendly intercourse between him, and those who are committed to his charge, in order that he might be enabled to remedy certain disorders and irregularities, which are of such complexion, as cannot be openly redressed; and especially for the sake of acquiring that honourable sort of influence over their minds, which will gradually dispose them to read religious books, to strengthen and enlarge their faith, by private and family devotion, and not to forget, in the commerce and business of active life, the unalterable principles of christian charity and love. This, and much more good, will be found,

on examination, to be done by many of our resident parochial clergy; and we may confidently add, that those who possess good means of information respecting that valuable class of men, will likewise perceive, that this spiritual acquaintance with their parishioners, is not effected by any of those low arts, by which the Romish priests obtained such an absolute sway over their laity; and by which, the religionists who form the subject of this essay, have such a surprising ascendancy over their followers, but by those free and unconstrained methods, equally suitable to their characters as gentlemen, and to their reputation for learning, common sense, and rational piety.*

Were, then, the clergy induced to reside in sufficient numbers, not by compulsory statutes, but by their having proper houses of residence secured

* It is the remark of Bishop Watson, whose liberal spirit corresponds with his solid judgment, and extensive erudition, "that there are many, among the poorest of the parochial clergy, whose merits as scholars, as christians, and as men, would be no disgrace to the most deserving prelate on the bench."—See his admirable Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1783.

to them, through the means of public and private patronage, our church would then be fully enabled to resist every open and insidious attack of its enemies; and, especially, of those sectaries who, unhappily for themselves and the community, have forsaken her sound tenets, to embrace others, which, while they conspire to puff them with the vain belief, that to them alone is given the inestimable privilege of discovering the true path of salvation, yet have no tendency, upon investigation, to render them better men, better christians, or better members of society, than those, who have not been led, by artful insinuations, or audacious invective, to depart from the national religion.

The domestic irreligion of the great, is the last of the causes, to which may be referred the quick and extensive diffusion of methodism. That the fundamental principles of christianity are not, in general, early, strongly, and awfully impressed upon the minds of the children of the rich, the powerful, and the noble, is a fact as notorious as it is lamentable. If, then, they are not trained from the tender

morn of their infancy, to a knowledge of God, and to habits of piety, we cannot reasonably expect to see the precepts of the Gospel exemplified in their conduct, upon their attaining the age of manhood. Devoted to pleasure, the love of which, as Aristotle* justly observes, is so nourished up with us from our very childhood, that it is very difficult to withdraw the mind from sensual objects, and to fix them upon things remote from sense, they then want the leisure, as much as the ability, to enter into the examination of the eternal truths of the christian religion. Should one of these sons of rank and fashion, on occasion of any great sickness or domestic affliction, reflect with some contrition on his riotous proceedings, that false modesty, or, in other words, that shame which hinders men from doing what they know to be their duty, and the dread of offending against custom, the law of fools, will inevitably suppress the virtuous intention he may have formed to amend his life. On the pagan

* “Ετι δε εκ νηπιε πασιν ημιν συνιθραπται ηδονη, διο και χαλεπον απολιριφασθαι τελο το παθος ευκεκρωσμενον τωβιω.”

principle, too, that the religion of the multitude is entitled to external reverence, he sometimes attends public worship; yet he never hesitates to avow the impious opinion, in the freedom of private conversation, that the christian religion is no more than a system of superstition, invented only to keep the vulgar in obedience, and supported by statesmen for political purposes. In this lamentable ignorance, in this frightful delusion, he probably continues until his "sins are as scarlet;" for if he keeps a mistress, his chaplain, more ambitious of temporal than spiritual honours, and, consequently, more complacent than sincere, will not dare to tell him, the Gospel designates that, as whoredom; and that the same unerring book calls his intriguing, adultery; and his duelling, murder.

Now the irreligion of the master is soon communicated to the servant. For there is the same aptness in the latter to adopt the sentiments and principles of the former, as there is to catch and imitate his manners. Is it wonder, then, that when such a person is led to the Tabernacle by curiosity, the love of novelty, or any other motive, he should

imagine himself placed in a new world, should in time mistake the jargon of fanaticism displayed there, for the perfection of real piety, and that, from having no religion at all, he should become so scrupulous and over-righteous, as to doubt if it be not an heinous sin to serve a master, whose numerous avocations may sometimes require that he should be inaccessible to visitors, when actually at home.* Such is the effect of superiors setting an infamous immoral example to their dependants and inferiors; it either renders them incurably wicked, or else transforms them into methodists.

From this imperfect, but impartial view of the rapid growth of Methodism, it will appear, this pernicious heresy has taken such deep root, that its spreading branches even threaten to over-shadow the established church. Cottages, huts, woods, moors, and even mines, have been visited by the

* "A gentleman's servant, who has left a good place because he was ordered to deny his master when actually at home, wishes something on this subject may be introduced into this work, that persons who are in the habit of denying themselves, in the above manner, may be convinced of its evil."—See Evangelical Magazine, p. 12.

proselytizing activity of its professors.* In the army and navy† they have insinuated their doctrines with most unexampled success; and as it is alike indifferent to them whether they accomplish the downfall of our establishment by open violence, or secret stratagem, provided it be accomplished, it is a part of their policy, we understand, to have a large fund for the purchase of livings, to which ministers of their own persuasion are of course always presented. Many wise and pious divines are of opinion, that every sect of christians have their use; inasmuch, as by their means, each important religious truth has the advantage of being set in a full light by some party or other. But surely the propriety of that opinion cannot be admitted respecting a sect, which unceasingly labours to blacken and discredit all those who did not adopt its tenets, which

* In delineating the particular doctrines of "these self-sent apostles," and in exposing their ambitious hopes, the Bishop of Bangor has indeed justly remarked, "that proselytism, not doctrine, is their great object."—P. 19. See the Charge of this highly esteemed, and truly learned Prelate, to his Diocese, in 1808.

† For their activity in those two departments of the state, see the Methodist and Evangelical Magazines.

wretchedly destitute of intellectual culture, requires its votaries to be hovering on the precipice of insanity, before they can be rightly prepared to come to the *New Birth*; a sect which without restraint, and without remorse, abuses the liberal indulgence of our church, by professing to belong to it, while it acts in open defiance to all established rules, and lastly, which has impiously dared to confine the future rewards of true piety solely to its followers.

Of such a sect then, we shall not be afraid to make this concluding remark; for never can it become a sincere member of the establishment to be ashamed of publicly contending for orthodoxy from the apprehension of being stigmatized for a bigot, that while we readily allow the methodists to be of the most respectable reputations in private society, yet as a body, their close hypocrisy and fraud, their violent and malignant zeal, their arrogant pretensions to the true character of primitive christians, and their limited notions* of

* It was from a just dislike to the narrow tenets of Aecius, that the emperor Constantine desired him to take a ladder,

the mercy of the Almighty, entitle them to the pity and contempt of every man of liberal education and understanding.

and get up to Heaven by himself. The ladder of this bishop, we will venture to add, has been more borrowed by the methodists, than by any other christian sect.

ESSAY VII.

On the Character of the fine Gentleman of the present Day.

IT is worthy of remark, that those who have carried their speculations to the changes of successive ages in manners, dress, and furniture, are prodigal in their censures against the preceding generations in these several particulars. This practice, however, is perhaps one of those, that would be more “honoured in the breach than in the observance,” notwithstanding the writers of the present day have evinced a most laudable degree of perseverance in praising their own times, and despising those of their fore-fathers. For though any one, after surveying the condition of a savage, may thank that Providence which cast his birth in a period of civilization, yet, for ought we can tell, the formal bow is not a fitter object of derision, than the vulgar nod; nor does it appear less difficult to associate the

ideas of elegance and convenience to a velvet suit, than to a plain broad cloth, or gothic to Egyptian chairs, and footstools.

Fashions, indeed, are as variable as the winds. The writer, therefore, whose patriotism is of that sublime nature, as to prefer his own times to those of any other, will be cautious in commending what is hardly known, before it is antiquated. He will, rather, confine his eulogies to things, subject to less sudden and violent revolutions, than decorations in dress, and furniture. But even in his view of the present manners, and in the causes alledged for an exclusive admiration of them, we are inclined to suspect, that we shall discover his notions to be more warped by prejudice, than directed by reason.

It may be amusing enough to see how far his opinions are founded upon the principle of right reasoning, with respect to the character of the fine gentleman of the present age. In the days of Addison and Pope, an affectation of refinement in his pursuits and pleasures, mixed with a solemn foppery of manners, a style of conversation congenial to

camps or courts, with some pretensions to wit and pleasantry, no great antipathy to free-thinkers, a smattering in the polite arts and sciences, a thorough ignorance of foreign states, conjoined, however, with a decided predilection for every thing *frenchified*, an ineffable contempt for the haters of dancing, music, and fencing, and a behaviour full of politeness, delicacy, and benevolence, towards the female sex, were held to be the distinguishing characteristics of the fine gentleman,

From an indiscriminate application, indeed, of that emphatic term, *fine gentleman*, the word is seldom introduced, without being abused. The requisites for obtaining this valuable appellation, are so numerous, and placed so much above the common reach, that it is not at all surprising, a finished gentleman should be considered as one of those extraordinary characters, which are rarely to be met with in real life. Possessed of all those mental attainments which may qualify him to obtain the title of a statesman and scholar, adorned at the same time with all those elegant accomplishments which are so seldom united in those, who are im-

mersed in trade, or engrossed in study, generous, humane, and courageous in his disposition, natural, easy, and dignified, in his manners, carrying the same independent principles into the court of princes, and the drawing-room of the great, as into the humble cottage; of habits extremely favourable to plain dealing, and sincerity, and deeply impressed with the force of moral and religious sentiments; in short, no mean proficiency in every department of excellence must be evinced, to justify solid pretensions to the character of a real fine gentleman.

— Let us now then proceed to state, how far the fine gentleman of the present day has benefited from the gifts of philosophy and literature, which have been shed upon him in such great abundance; and in doing this, we must disclaim all idea of turning him into ridicule, by an extravagant caricature, or to let the desire of passing for a wit or satyrist, overpower our love of truth.

So great a portion of the world aspire to gentility, that it would be now as difficult, as it was before easy, to concentrate their number, when the Col-

lege of Heralds imposed restraints upon the promiscuous assumption of the title of Esquire. The hitherto distinct orders of nobles and merchants, seem now linked together by an indissoluble tie. And, if between their taste in conversation, clothes, or furniture, any difference can be fairly established, it is, perhaps, to be placed on the monied side; for this sentiment of Horace, has never been more completely verified than in the present age. “*Nobilitas, sine re projecta, vilior alga.*” When there are names enrolled in the livery and companies of London, from which, the first characters might be justly proud of their descent, we cannot be accused of insinuating, in what has just now been said, that those who have sat in the counting-house, or stood in the shop, are not entitled to aspire to the rank of Gentleman. On the contrary, it appears to us, that the followers of the mercantile profession, would have been still more worthy of that respectable name, if so many of them had not been transformed into nabobs and stock-jobbers; a set of men, of whom it may be truly said, the primary and permanent motives of their indefatigable exertions are, an exorbitant

love of gain, which however, it may ultimately conduct to a state of independence and elevation, is extremely averse to the acquirements of liberal sentiments, and of liberal manners.

Licet superbus ambulat pecunia

Fortuna non mutat genus.

Horace, Ep. Ode II.

It would startle the leaders of fashions if we were to compare their occupations to those of the children of Israel; but it would puzzle many, perhaps, who figure away in a distinguished circle of society, to find, that they do any more "than sit to eat, drink, and rise to play."* After having made the grand tour, more like a courier than a traveller, the next step in the career of a fine Gentleman is, to commence senator. To expect every man who takes his seat in the House of Lords, or Commons, should possess eloquence sufficient to maintain his character as a debater, would be, doubtless, the acmê of absurdity. But, assuredly, it is not very unreasonable to require, especially, at this momentous crisis, that the young and fashionable mutes of those

* Exodus, chap. xxxii.

assemblies, should be more conversant in the laws of their country, than in those of Newmarket, or Brookes's; should sometimes think, that other qualifications are indispensably necessary for the guardians of the lives and liberty of millions, than the skill to play at whist, and to calculate the odds. Certainly, in the tremendous situation in which this country is placed, it is no great stretch of indignation to declare, we cannot even excuse the fine Gentleman regarding the senate as a mere coffee-house, or place of lounge, however we may overlook his indifference to its important decisions,

Profoundly ignorant as he is in the whole science of politics, yet in that of dancing, boxing, and driving, he can display a knowledge, zeal, and activity, which entitle him to character,

“Above all Greek, above all Roman fame.”

But a deep, broad, and permanent line of distinction must be drawn between the fine Gentleman of that first nation and him of the present day, in the multiplicity of their accomplishments. Since, strange to relate, the former had an art of uniting, what the latter has not yet found out even in this

age of genius, and discovery, the seemingly repugnant attainments of dancing, and philosophy, boxing and poetry, driving and oratory.

Poetry, from time immemorial, has been considered the classical reading of the fine Gentleman. But it is very doubtful to us, whether the Sybarite of the present day, has any relish for it, at least for its higher flights. Since we may fairly presume, that he who proscribes from his table all topics of conversation except those relative to cards, dice, or horse-racing, will more affect the composition of a Little, than a Cowper. While the pages of such dull and uninformed writers as Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon, should he happen by chance to cast his eye upon them, would be sure to operate upon his spirits as a Sirocco wind.*

The stage is justly regarded as the school of elegant criticism; but according to the canons of haut

* The ennui, if we may be permitted to use this word, with which a Neapolitan is inspired during the continuance of a Sirocco, or south-east wind, is said to be so great, as almost to extinguish passion.—See Brydone's Tour, vol. I. p. 4. Kotzebue, whose love of paradoxes and singular opinions, is as conspicuous as his egotism, affects, in his account of Naples, to find this wind vastly agreeable and invigorating.

ton, a tale of sorrow is to produce no other effect upon the fine Gentlemen, than a sneer of derision, or a complacent survey of the folds of their coats; and by the same wretched perversion of taste and feelings, a coarse joke or an impertinent piece of buffoonry, is to be applauded, till they "almost split the ears of the groundlings."

Politeness, in days of yore, was connected, perhaps, with too many arts, to be graceful or easy. But surely that was preferable to the unbounded freedom of behaviour and kind of determined air now assumed by the fine Gentleman. It is but justice, however, to him to admit, that no small share of this change must be attributed to the other sex. There was a time, when a woman of exalted rank would not have mistaken effrontery for dignity, or despised modesty as a vulgar virtue. But now, every thing is sacrificed for the love of notoriety. If then a lady should happen to be offended with some of the double entendres which assail her ears from the mouths of these fine Gentlemen, or with their impudent air or look, or should take no great liking to hear her best friends pulled to pieces, all

of which circumstances, we allow, are extremely improbable, there is surely no right to complain of an evil, which she has so largely contributed to bring about.

The marriage knot is never drawn by the fine Gentleman unless to repair his fortunes, *Μονον αργυρον βλεπεις*. While all his tenderest sympathies are reserved for his mistress, who constitutes as essential a part of his establishment, as his horses, and carriages. Acquaintances, the fine gentleman has in great abundance; but friends, none. For independent of the absurdity of loving an object which we cannot esteem, who would court the affections of so dangerous and capricious a being, as a fine gentleman; since such are the sentiments of honour which his erroneous notions of gentility have instilled into him, that it would be as impossible for him, on any slight or unintentional offence from his friend, to substitute the benevolent delight of forgiveness for the savage glory of aiming a pistol at his head; as it would, for a wild set of visionaries to become at once rational and practical in their schemes of improvement. While he is so completely

the child of caprice, that what to day constituted his chief pleasure, will to-morrow be insupportable and tormenting to him. Thus flying from one extreme to another, he exhibits, by turns, all the inconsistencies of human nature. If such be the summer, what must the autumn of a fine Gentleman's life disclose? A hideous void, which cannot be filled up with new pleasures or sensual gratifications, while all those marks of esteem and veneration,

“ Which should accompany old age,
 “ As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
 “ He must not look to have; but in their stead,”

the silent contempt and derision of his children, and dependents, and the open hatred of all those, who are not afraid to practise the most unfashionable virtues, in the most fashionable societies.

ESSAY VIII.

On Bastards.

THAT there is a reigning quality in every age, has been demonstrated by the exploring genius of history. If we turn to the annals of antiquity, we shall discover, that heroism and cowardice, œconomy and dissipation, have been, by turns, the distinguishing characteristics of the states of Greece and Italy. Much, however, as we are addicted to extol the past, at the expence of the present times, the remark may be safely hazarded, that human nature is the same in all ages. The benevolent sentiments of affection and friendship, the angry passions of jealousy and envy, and the detestable ones of malice, hatred, and rage, alike possess the breast of the Hottentot and European. The character of mankind has, indeed, been always compounded of a mixture of virtues and vices, though

at different periods they have appeared under different forms ; but upon the general character of a particular nation, its government unquestionably possesses a considerable influence, since it would be the most striking of all political anomalies, for the rulers of the state to be wise and virtuous, and the people ignorant and profligate.

Every man who has looked upon the late debates in the great council of the nation, will feel no hesitation to avow, that the present age has but small pretensions to that character of devoted patriotism, which marked the actions of an early Roman. The sense of a danger, the most unprecedented and unparalleled, that ever menaced this country, instead of terminating party dissensions, seems to have re-kindled them with greater fury than ever. Not the balance of Europe will sooner be restored, than an union of councils for the public good take place between the leaders of opposition, and those of administration.

Some writers have ventured to declare, that selfishness is the ruling principle of this age. Others,

with more confidence have affirmed it to be that of luxury, and have brought forward several instances in support of their peremptory decision. But, as it is the part of true wisdom to be careful in erecting general theories from a few particular observations, or appearances, we see every reason, from an examination of the particular cases adduced by them, to consider such views as hasty and erroneous, and to concur with those who think, that libertinism is the distinguishing characteristic of the present age.

In coinciding, however, with this conclusion, we are fully sensible, that it admits of no small modification, and restriction; yet, it is certainly to be preferred to those, which have determined the character of the present age to be that of selfishness, or luxury. Upon the supposition, therefore, that the majority in the low, middle, and high stations of life, in this country, are actuated by the dreadful vice of libertinism; and many facts unfortunately exist to prove, that this hypothesis is founded on the basis of truth, we are naturally led to a view of that unhappy state of beings denominated

Bastards; a theme which may be said to come home to the feelings of almost every man.

According to the calculation of Dr. Colquhoun, in his treatise on Indigence, it appears, that the number of persons who are supported wholly or partly by the bounty of others, amounts to more than a million. If this computation be just; and it seems too well founded to excite any suspicion of inaccuracy, we may fairly estimate, that a great part of this melancholy catalogue is swelled by those, whose spurious birth deprives them of all rights of society; and upon whose misfortunes, which they owe not to their own follies and vices, but to the crimes of their parents, the most opprobrious epithets have been thrown, in almost every nation, and every age.

But before we proceed to survey the condition of Bastards, and to express our wishes, that the legislature would adopt measures that should re-adjust or re-model some of the existing statutes relative to that description of persons, for assuredly the attempt may be made without infringing upon

any of those proud distinctions which are regarded as the appendages of chastity, a cursory review of the situation of Bastards in ancient times, will not perhaps be here misplaced.

From the days of Homer down to the present times, a mark of infamy, more or less, has been affixed upon the issue of concubinage. It is true, indeed, that in the earliest periods, instances have occurred, of natural children being preferred, or at least being put on an equal footing with the offspring of marriage. But we may fairly assign the origin of such conduct in the father, to the concubine having taken an entire hold of his affections, by her beauty, or an amiable disposition, superior to that of his wife. Under such circumstances, we may suppose Telamon to be actuated, when he declared his son Teucer worthy of a seat at his table, *περ' εόντα νόθον*,* although a bastard. This solitary example, nor even that of natural children succeeding to their father's kingdoms; in cases only, however, of failure in legitimate issue, cannot therefore

* See Iliad, Lib. VIII. line 284.

be urged as a just reason for rejecting the belief of a practice, which has been confirmed by the whole course of antiquity.

If we turn our eyes towards the republics of Athens, and Rome, we shall not fail to discover, that the laws made against Bastards, were well calculated to inspire the minds of the people with a deep and lasting respect for the institution of marriage. According to the jurisprudence of Solon, the Athenian Bastard was declared incapable of assuming the name of his father, and likewise of inheriting any of his estates, and was most rigorously excluded from any interference in the affairs of government. Still farther to widen the distinction between the offspring of the concubine, and that of the wife, it was established by the same lawgiver, that those who had no legitimate sons, should be compelled to give their estates to their daughters. Some faint traces, however, of commiseration for their condition are discoverable, in one of Solon's laws, which allowed them a thousand drachmas, or five Attic pounds. The prototype of this institution may be found in the twenty-fifth chapter of

Genesis: "And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac; but unto the sons of the concubines which Abraham had, Abraham did give gifts."* The benevolence and equity of Solon are also equally to be applauded, when he exempted natural children from all obligation to relieve their parents, on the just ground, that not the hope of a progeny, but the indulgence of their sensual passions, was the sole motive which led them to form an illicit† connection. Instances, however, can be produced, where the stern spirit of the law in Athens has been softened in favour of bastards. It is recorded by Aristotle, in his Politics, that sometimes the people admitted these unhappy outcasts into the number of citizens, in order to increase their power in opposition to the great.‡ And we have a remarkable proof of the ascendancy which that eloquent statesman, Pericles, obtained over the minds of the Athe-

* Genesis, xxv. 5, 6.—A Bastard, by the law of Moses, was expelled from the congregation of Israel.—See Deuteronomy, xxiii. 2.

† See Plutarch in Solone.

‡ Lib. VI. Cap. IV.

nians, when he could first persuade them to revive the law introduced by Solon, viz. that the rights and honour of a citizen should be exclusively confined to those whose parents had before possessed them; and afterwards in favour of his natural children, to cancel it.

Such, then, was the condition of Bastards, in the first state of ancient Greece. And, if we contemplate the Roman code of laws, the same oppression, and the same exclusion from the rights of society, will be found to mark their wretched destiny. Between the tables of Solon, and those of the Decemvirs, some striking similarities may be traced; although, perhaps, in the great and fundamental parts of their system, they widely differed. But when Cicero* hesitates not to avow, that the laws of the twelve tables are to be preferred to whole libraries of the philosophers, and affects to condemn the Athenian legislator, it might be reasonably expected, that *the rule of right, and the fountain of all public and private justice* for so those tables are

* See De Oratore, Lib. I. and De Legibus, Lib. II.

styled by Tacitus* and Livy,† should contain some positive injunctions, which fixed the condition of Bastards in the scale of political beings. But no such trait of justice appears upon the face of them. The son of a prostitute, says the law, is to be excluded from the rights of the people.‡ The only act of benevolence which extended towards his state, and this is destitute of all pretensions to originality, if we may credit the story§ of the tables of the Decemvirs being borrowed from the laws of Solon, is that, which bears an exact affinity to a former quoted maxim of Grecian jurisprudence,

* Annalia, Lib. III. Cap. XXVIII.

† Hist. Rom. Lib. III. Cap. XXXIV.

‡ Ex meretrice natus, ne concionetur.—Quintilian, Lib. VIII. The reader must not here confound the son of the concubine with that of the prostitute; since the former might be legitimated, and succeed to the sixth part of the inheritance of his putative father. This commerce was therefore deemed an inferior sort of marriage.

§ Livy believes that three distinguished personages visited Athens, under the administration of Pericles, for the above-mentioned purpose.—Hist. Rom. Lib. VIII. See the satisfactory reasons assigned by Gibbon for rejecting this embassy.—The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Vol. VIII. P. 8, 9.

namely, that the Bastard shall not be obliged to toil for the subsistence of his uncertain father.

Quitting these periods of antiquity, and descending to the middle ages, we shall discover that the manners of those times were far more favourable to the condition of Bastards. In the eleventh, and fourteenth centuries, the spurious race of adultery and prostitution are to be seen not only enjoying the honours and offices of public life, but from their class, some of them even obtaining the sway of kingdoms. To confirm this last assertion, it is sufficient to cite the names of William the Conqueror, and Henry of Transtamare, and John, grand master of the order of the Avis; nor did England, Castile, or Portugal, ever attempt to dethrone these monarchs on the principle of their illegitimate birth. The barons of those days, indeed, would justly have been subject to the charge of inconsistency, if they had treated with contempt a name which they gloried in assuming. *Ego Bastardus*, is sometimes an expression to be met with in old charters. The appellative became a surname. The blood of princes was, indeed, so much defiled by bastardies,

that if we may believe the historian, Philip de Comines, who flourished in the fifteenth century, there existed in his time, but little distinction in Italy between natural and legitimate children.* “Blest be the Bastards birth,” was an exclamation which the poet might then have made use of, and found it sanctioned by the truth of history. But though the moralist may lament the fate of those, who are deprived of their common rights for crimes not their own, and rejoice when they are restored to them, yet he would not wish to extend the clemency of the laws so far, as to recognize the Bastard’s right of succession to the crown. Since no maxim of modern policy is more incontrovertible, than that the title of a sovereign cannot be too clear, nor his birth too much respected. For with them, the peace and welfare of future generations are deeply connected.

In England, however, every condition seems to be introduced by the municipal law, that could

* Mais il ne font pointe grand différence au país d’Italie, d’enfant bastarde a un légitime.—Tom. II. Liv. VII. P. 10.

render the institution of marriage dignified and venerable ; for it deemed all those to be Bastards, who were born before wedlock. The civil and canon laws were more indulgent to the frailty of human nature, and acknowledged the legitimacy of the child on the nuptials of his parents. When the bishops, in the parliament assembled at Merton, in the twentieth year of the reign of Henry the Third, proposed to the earls and barons, that children born before marriage should be esteemed legitimate in conformity to the canon law, the unanimous reply was, *We will not change the laws of England, which have been hitherto used and approved.** It is, however, reasonable to suppose, that the peers would not so hastily have pronounced a law, which throws all the punishment upon the descendant of an unlawful conjunction, if the bishops, under the protection of their spiritual leader, the Roman pontiff, had not made in that reign, several great and effectual efforts to establish the canon, upon the ruins of the common law of the kingdom. They wisely,

* Et omnes barones unâ voce responderunt, quod nolunt leges Angliæ mutare, quæ huc usque usitatæ sunt et approbatæ.—See Statute of Merton, 20 Hen. III. Chap. IX.

therefore, determined to embrace the first favourable incident, of setting proper bounds to an attempt, so injurious to their own, and the common interests.

By the Germans, many of whose usages and political institutions have been adopted with us, the unhappy bastard was scarcely ranked among the human species. But in Spain and France, he participated in almost all the rights of society, and was in some respects upon a footing with legitimate children. During the first and second races of the kings of France, if a prince or noble, acknowledged a natural child to be his child, this simple confession was deemed equivalent to any formal legitimation. But the tyrannous inequality of the law condemned the Bastards of an inferior station, to a perpetual slavery or villainage. After the succession of the Capetian line, the royal Bastards were, however, no longer suffered to exalt their heads above the level of their fellow-subjects. They were no longer held to be of the blood royal, and every extraordinary dignity was refused them, except that of bearing the arms of France with a bar. A similar limitation of honours, took place, with re-

gard to the Bastards of princes and nobles. By an ordinance of the year 1600, it was established, that the natural children of nobility should not be admitted into the class of gentlemen, unless they obtained letters of nobility. A more fortunate revolution attended the plebeian Bastards. By the law of that enlightened period, they were no longer confounded with the rest of the cattle on the domains of their masters; but began to be considered in the respectable light of free-men; and if we except the power of receiving and transmitting succession, it will be difficult to mention any privilege which they did not enjoy with the rest of their fellow subjects.*

Having now glanced at the laws which reason, and prejudice more powerful than reason, enacted against the name† and condition of Bastards in an-

* See Œuvres de Chancelier d'Aguesseau, Tom. VII. p. 881.

† In England he is called base born, and thereupon some say, that a Bastard is as much as to say, one that is a base natural; for *aerd* signifieth nature.—See Coke upon Littleton, vol. 244. But Sir Henry Spelman is dissatisfied with this derivation, and con-

cient periods, we shall proceed to consider the present rights, or perhaps, more properly speaking, the incapacities of those, who have that stain affixed upon their birth in this country; and the duties which the law imposes upon the authors of their existence. The jurisprudence of England, as we have before remarked, brands him with the name of Bastard, who is not born in lawful wedlock. If marriage, however, takes place within a few months of the delivery of the child, the law is not so rigorous, as to refuse to it the rights of legitimacy, although it was ordained, that if the marriage happened subsequent to the conception of the child, it should suffer the disgrace of bastardy. The rights, if we may use that word, in speaking of these outcasts of society, are so few, that they may be soon enumerated. Regarded in the eye of the law as

siders it as a pure Saxon word, *Bastardt*, viz. impure natus, ut apud nos, *upstart* dicitur homo novus.—See Spelman's Gloss.—*Bastardt*. There is, however, great speciousness in some writers supposing the word Bastard was derived from base-terred, or laid on the ground, because such illegitimate offspring were not entitled to the honours of filiation, till by the father taken up from the ground. This ceremony was called in Latin, *tollere*, after which the child was considered little, if at all, inferior to what is now understood by lawfully begotten.

the son of nobody, the Bastard is declared incapable of inheritance, and succession. But although he is not called to the inheritance of any possessions, it does appear that the law authorizes him to gain a surname by reputation.*

It is the evident object of the legislature, to have perfect justice dealt out alike to all. But as this is never attainable, from the utter impossibility to ascertain the punishment due to him, for instance, who commits the crime of ingratitude, † with a degree of sufficient accuracy to satisfy the feelings of the injured party; nevertheless, to keep it constantly in view, ought to be the fundamental principle of every code. It may, therefore, be reckoned a rare species of injustice, to deny the Bastard the rights of society, and yet to fetter him with the same restrictions in the disposal of his person, as the law imposes on all legitimate children. And this is done, when it

* See Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. I. p. 459.

† There was a law in Athens to prosecute those for ingratitude who did not retaliate kindnesses.—See Potter's Antiquities of Greece, vol. I. p. 170. How apparent is the utility of such a law, but how impracticable its execution!

declares, that if a Bastard marries under age by licence, he must obtain the consent of his reputed father, guardian, or mother.*

Of the incapacities of the Bastard, the principal one may be said to consist in being ordained the heir to no one, and likewise of being incapable of having any heirs, but those of his own body. For as he is stigmatized by the law with the degrading appellation of *filius nullius*, and sometimes *filius populi*, he can have no legal ancestors; and of consequence, none can be entitled to succeed to his vacant possessions, but those who claim a lineal descent from him. But the civil law differs essentially in this point, and grants to a Bastard the right of inheritance, if after his birth, the mother was married to the father. It still further proclaims its humanity and justice, when it declares, that if the father has no lawful wife, and if the concubine was never married to the father, yet she and her bastard son should both be admitted each to one-twelfth of the inheritance. Nor does it expose the bastard to

* See Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. I: p. 458, note 11.

any legal disqualification of possessing the whole of his mother's estate, although she was never married; an indulgence which was founded on the principle of there being no difficulty in ascertaining who was his mother, whatever there might be in ascertaining his father.* But, for what reason the civil law should prohibit the Bastard from receiving even a gift† from his father, in some cases, is a question, which we leave to be resolved by those, who are more conversant in those nice distinctions, so often made by law equity, to the total overthrow of common sense,

In viewing, then, the municipal law of the kingdom, and the civil law in regard to Bastards, it is evident, from the differences already enumerated, that their chief outlines by no means concur; and it must be confessed, that the latter seems much more disposed than the former, to remove the badge of infamy from that unhappy portion of the human species. The only decisive instance where

* See Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. II. p. 247.

† See Code, 6, 5, 7, 5.

our law abates its severe tyranny against the bastard, and seems to befriend him, is, when a man has two sons, the elder of whom is a natural, and the other a legitimate child. It then enacts, that if the father die, and the Bastard enter upon his lands, and enjoy them to his death, they shall descend by inheritance to his issue, to the utter exclusion of the legitimate son and his heirs. Because it is not just, observes that great oracle of jurisprudence, Lord Coke, for a man to be bastardized after his death, who has passed for legitimate the whole time of his life.* But this rule is applicable only, when a man has a bastard son, and afterwards marries the mother, by whom he has a legitimate son. This order of succession, though regulated by nature, was established as a punishment to the mother, for her negligence, in not dispossessing the Bastard during his life time; nor would the law give validity to the title of any other kind of Bastard. Some trivial indulgence our law also shews to the Bastard, in the transmission of his property. It was formerly

* *Justum non est aliquem post mortem suam facere bastardum, qui toto tempore vita sua pro legitimo habebatur.*—See Coke upon Littleton, vol. II. 24 a.

decided, that if he died intestate, and without wife or progeny, the ordinary might dispose of his goods in *pious usos*. But under those existing circumstances, it was considered, that the king was entitled to his private property, as administrator; and it was customary, for the crown to grant the administration of it to some of the relations of the Bastard's father or mother, reserving one-tenth, or some small proportion of it.* Such, then, are the incapacities of the bastard; and if we add to the list, that equity will not supply the defect of a surrender of a copyhold to a natural, as it will to a legitimate child, it must be obvious to every one, that the legislature has scrupulously guarded against the admission of Bastards into the rights of society.

It would now be the most pleasing part of the Essay, to represent the law, though hostile to the political existence of the Bastard, yet laying its parents under an obligation, to continue their support, until he had some certain means of succeeding in the world. But the more agreeable

* See Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. II. p. 506, note 9.

is the fiction, the more intolerable becomes the reality. By the cruel equality of the law, for well does it deserve to be called so in this case, the rich parent is not obliged to make a greater provision than the poor one for the natural issue of his body.* It follows, therefore, that however qualified a Bastard may be by his talents, for stations of respectability and consequence, yet, unless his opulent father be so far awakened to the sensibilities of nature, as to remove those checks and impediments which hinder his promotion, the abilities which he possesses may be considered as so many curses. Between the Bastard of the gentleman, and the peasant, we do then contend, that a wise legislature should enforce some distinction; and not deny to the former the opportunity of reaping some substantial advantage from his superior education, which is effectually done, if, in a fit of caprice, prejudice, or passion, the father should withhold that support which, continued to a proper season, would have enabled him to obtain that situation he had been so long labouring for. Since the fact is notorious, that there are those in that description, who reflect

* See Burn's Ecclesiastical Law, vol. I. p. 132, note 5.

as little on leaving a natural child to depend entirely upon himself, and his own bodily and intellectual energies, as the Turkish Emperor would do, on exercising his privilege of killing fourteen men a day, without assigning any reason.

We trust, the remarks we have already made, will be sufficient to demonstrate, that the Bastard has no very powerful inducement to join in the general praise of the unexampled impartiality and benevolence of our laws. It is not even a paradox, perhaps, to say, that the evils of a despotic, are to be preferred by him to the blessings of a free government; for which is the most mortifying, to live under a government clogged with a multiplicity of restrictions and severities, and where the name of liberty cannot be mentioned without the greatest peril; but to which, he is not more exposed than the rest of the community; or to be fixed in a free state, but to see its inestimable privileges and advantages, respecting himself, rendered inoperative? This question, we should suppose, need only be stated to be decided. Admitting, then, the position, that the Bastard has just ground of com-

plaint of the disabilities and incapacities under which he labours, it remains for us to consider the reasonableness and expediency of relaxing them.

They who refuse their consent to improvements from an overstrained dread of innovation, will shut their ears to all arguments, which can be advanced, for the removal of the various privations of the Bastard, and will be disposed to view those who propose them, in the light of political theorists, who are perpetually opposing crude and hasty conclusions, to the unerring deductions of experience. Such men, indeed, let their feelings of humanity be so completely stifled by the abhorrence of innovation,* that with them, this is a question which has no connection with any practical and moral purposes; or else, so perverted are their judgments, by their ill-founded fears, that they would only class

* To persons of this description, the words of Canuleius are peculiarly applicable.—“Can no circumstances authorize innovations? and must those things which have utility for their object, not be done, because they have never been done before?”—See Titus Livius, Lib. IV. Cap. IV.

it with those, which are productive of the most mischievous consequences. Not so do the advocates of a more wise, and just, and liberal policy, reason and determine. Though it is the peculiar property and distinguishing characteristic of laws, to be deaf to every voice, but that of the public benefit, yet to throw upon a particular class of beings all its weights, and none of its benefits, appears to them to be both unwise and unjust. It likewise seems to them reasonable to maintain, that our laws, in not paying any attention to the wants and feelings of Bastards, have obstructed, rather than promoted, the great cause of virtue and morality. For as their race, from the licentiousness of the times, is unfortunately so numerous, as to comprehend a very considerable portion of the community, no pains should be spared, no incentives be wanted, to render them respectable members of the state. At present, they are considered as little better than the scum or off-scouring of society. But if parliament, in its omnipotence, would frame a statute, which would give natural children a legal claim on the property of their parents, it would pave the way to make them better men

and better citizens, and would ultimately check or suppress those habits, which are abhorrent from the inflexible rules of virtue prescribed by the laws for the good of society; nor does the recollection, that if such a measure were to receive the sanction of a law, how much it would intrench upon the temporal advantages of legitimate children, at all abate their desire of seeing it brought to pass; since in the fulness of their benevolence, the above class of political reasoners maintain, that the evil experienced thereby, would not be commensurate to the great and permanent good thus likely to be effected.

Such, we believe, are the leading arguments of these philanthropists. It is pretty evident, that the legislature has imposed such restrictions on the Bastard as are subversive of a spirit of just and social pride, and of improvement among them; and it may likewise, perhaps, be rationally suspected, that these restrictions are repugnant to the genius of a constitution, which is ever disposed to reverence the principles of justice and humanity. But as the most plausible theories, when reduced to practice,

are often attended with the most futile or pernicious consequences, it may be questioned, whether the evil resulting from an encroachment on the pecuniary rights of the Bastard, could counterbalance the good which a mitigation of the statute against him might produce. Those, who in their blind admiration of the ancient code of jurisprudence, are led to shrink from every proposal of reformation, as wild and dangerous, or to ridicule it as visionary and absurd, most zealously contend, that the laws in respect to Bastards, from the circumstances in which they were formed, were entitled to be immortal; and boldly challenge their opponents to bring forth an instance of a Bastard being legitimated by an act of parliament, bating the exception of John of Gaunt's children.

But the British constitution has experienced a mighty revolution since the days of King Richard the Second. The enlightened statesman of the present day, however strong a predilection he may entertain for a system, the benefits of which have been so well ascertained by experience, yet if some errors and inconveniences, hardships, and oppres-

sions, are discoverable in certain parts of it, his respect for that ancient system, will not carry him so far as to oppose such remedies, as sound policy and practical humanity shall suggest for their rectification. Besides, we may venture to ask these fierce and determined foes to innovation, how comes it that if all the laws in respect to the Bastard are meant to be immortal, that the one which declared him incapable of taking holy orders, though that was afterwards dispensed with, yet rigorously excluded him from becoming a dignitary of the church, should now have slept for ages.

If, then, in times less favourable to the feelings of justice and humanity, it was not deemed a sacrilege to abolish or render obsolete some decisions relative to the Bastard, it will not, perhaps, be considered in the light of an objectionable position, even to those who manifest the most inveterate dislike to proffered improvements, to advance, that the modification of the laws in force against Bastards, would stop up many avenues to abandoned wickedness and profligacy; would much contribute to check that growing levity and dissipation of mind

which are the greatest impediments to all substantial improvements in virtue and goodness; and, lastly, would promote the developement of the moral energies among those, whom, the legislature has only noticed in such a manner, as if their habits, affections, and system of manners, were as offensive, as their condition is degrading and deplorable. In Denmark, whose despotic structure of government promises but little respect to the rights of those, who are doomed to perpetual ignominy by the most enlightened of all political constitutions; yet, to its eternal honour be it spoken, it is decreed, that natural children should have half the property which the law allows to legitimate children, and the whole if there are no legitimate children.* May we not, then, indulge the pleasing hope, that the period is not far distant, when the august bodies, in whose hands are deposited the legislative authority, will, without losing sight of the land-marks which our fore-fathers have set, deem it as unwise, as it certainly is unjust, to defraud of all political rights, a set of beings, who seem hitherto fated to complain

* See Catteau, Tableau des Etats Danois.

of grievances, which become more galling, from being unpitied, more intolerable, from being unmerited.

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ESSAY IX.

Of the Qualifications requisite in an Ambassador.

THAT the French have not only become masters of the destiny of their neighbours, but even established themselves in universal power, as much by the effects of intrigues, as by the force of arms, is one of those propositions which needs only to be stated, in order to be fully admitted. And we are afraid, it is not less abundantly clear, that we have as much augmented the resources and dominions of France, and completed the ruin of our allies, by the conduct of our diplomatic affairs, as that we are still able to baffle and defy all the attacks of that overgrown power, and its train of dependents, chiefly, or rather solely, by the means of our naval greatness.

It would certainly, then, be no very great absurdity of reasoning to conclude, that as it is a

distinguishing feature of the policy of France, in respect to her foreign relations, to employ none but men of the most manageable and imposing characters, the expediency of England exercising an equal vigilant anxiety in the appointment of its ambassadors, would be equally obvious even to those, who are but superficially acquainted with this most important branch of politics. Yet, if we look with an impartial attention to the history of our late continental wars, the events and termination of them will but too unfortunately demonstrate, that no such vigilant anxiety was displayed for the general good of the community.

As it is, then, an established opinion, that able men in this country, but with very few exceptions, have not been, of late years, nominated to diplomatic stations; to which circumstance, we presume, a great portion of the late and present miseries of Europe may be safely traced; the attempt in us may be pardoned, to exhibit a short sketch of those parts, natural and acquired, which we humbly conceive are indispensably necessary for the representatives of our Sovereign to possess, in order that they

may be qualified to discharge their high functions with credit to themselves, and honour to their country. An inquiry into the causes which have led to that ignorance, so manifest and so deplorable in our foreign policy, would, doubtless, be more curious and interesting, than the picture we are about to represent to our readers; yet it will be assuredly recollected, that any such enquiry, even if it were conducted with all possible decorum, would inevitably entangle us in the discussion of questions of too personal a nature, to be touched, much less to be dwelt upon, in the form of a sober and dispassionate Essay.

From the vast range of knowledge necessarily embraced by the science of politics, we should be justified in considering, that no one could expect to make any great proficiency, unless he brought to it a considerable portion of inquisitiveness, understanding, and discernment. Yet it is worthy of observation, that in no study, have we more smatterers, and fewer adepts. This observation may particularly apply to our diplomatists in general. In those days, when France was only counted

among the great powers of the Continent, without possessing the least ascendancy over them, it was customary for those who were enrolled in the diplomatic corps, first to become pupils, before they aspired to be masters. But when France began to swallow up every other state that it could bring within its grasp, by a singular defect of foresight, we seemed more supine than ever in guarding against the return of past evils, by not taking care to meet its ambitious despot with his own arts, and to fight him with his own weapons; or, in other words, to remove all inferior men from their diplomatic stations,

Some persons we know, and sensible ones too, in other respects, have persuaded themselves, that a natural sagacity and a good reasonable judgment, are qualifications sufficient for the post of an ambassador. Possessed of these, he may step forth, they think, like Minerva from the brain of Jove, all provided to become a fit representative of his sovereign. But those, who are disposed to embrace this opinion, take but little or no account of the retrospect and comparison which is necessary to be

made in all political matters, in order to acquire that reasonable good judgment, or of the infinite modifications and new combinations it is capable of undergoing. In this assertion, we would not be understood as saying, that no man can execute the office of an envoy with success, unless he early discovers that decided predilection for it, as Pascal did for mathematics, or Vandyke for painting: all we profess to urge is, that he would assuredly expose his ignorance and presumption, who should imagine, that the duties of an Ambassador are to be properly discharged, and the dignity of his station to be preserved, without his displaying that enlargement and expansion of intellect, and acuteness of discrimination, which can only be the result of having first read, and travelled much in his closet, and afterwards looked upon men and affairs, in a variety of countries, and a variety of views.

Before any one, therefore, can reasonably hope to be distinguished as a diplomatist, or even venture to assume the character of one, he should first judge it expedient to visit the principal courts of Europe, in order to inform himself, as far as lies in

his power, of all those circumstances, which might hereafter enable him to transact the affairs of his own country with the best possible advantage. Nor is it unimportant to remark, that in this private situation he will stand the fairest chance of getting rid of those vulgar misconceptions, and local prejudices, which, if he suffers to regulate, or even to form a part of his official conduct, and this has been, of late, too often the case, will produce consequences more untoward from being unexpected, and which cannot afterwards be averted by the wisest plans, or the deepest stratagems.

It would be a rare species of absurdity, to imagine an ambassador ignorant of the language of the country to which he was dispatched. Yet a certain appointment has not put this supposition beyond the bounds of credibility. Upon such an appointment, however, no censure can be too great. For occasions will daily and hourly occur, in the course of an embassy, where if the head of it does not display the minutest accuracy, both in conversing and writing, the interests of his country may be materially affected. If we attend also to the opinions

of those, who are not disposed to see the urgent necessity of an ambassador's possessing intellectual attainments of the highest order, it will appear, that our regret need not be very excessive, if the stock of his historical information be but scanty and imperfect. We are, however, led to believe, that reasoning to be fundamentally erroneous, which teaches us to think, that because in this critical state of public affairs, events have arisen of a nature so totally new and unlooked for, as to appear without a precedent in the page of ancient or modern history, the study of it is not calculated to fit a man in an eminent degree for the office or business of an ambassador. In tracing the springs of human conduct, that knowledge of the world which is communicated by experience, will, perhaps, in many cases, enable us to form a more successful judgment, than that, which is derivable from history, and books of speculation. Yet it is equally undeniable, that he who has been accustomed to contemplate with a philosophic eye the fortunes of nations, and the revolutions of empire, which History exhibits in successive order, will oftentimes act in transactions of the highest import, with a promptitude,

decision, and success, which will be set down by the ignorance of spectators, as the effects of good fortune, instead of being ascribed to the excellence of that study, which teaches us to foresee events, and of course to prevent them. As well, therefore, may it be said, that active life is not the noblest sphere of a great genius, as that a thorough acquaintance with modern history must not be enumerated among the primary acquirements of him, who aspires to pass the chief part of his life in important embassies. But whatever difference of opinion may subsist upon this assertion, we will venture to affirm, the following one will meet the approbation of all classes of politicians. That no prospect of present or future advantage should induce any one to go as an ambassador to a country, for whose character, taste, or manners, he professes to entertain the sentiments of aversion or contempt. Nor does the possibility of their being either just or laudable, at all compensate for the existence of this evil. The whole train of domestic prejudices, and the antipathies which they inspire, ought to be banished from the recollection of the foreign minister, or else his influence will be remote or feeble, in contributing

to the honour and interests of his particular nation, and to the happiness of Europe at large. Far be it from us, in this assertion, to insinuate aught personally disrespectful to those who have of late years been employed in our foreign diplomacy, although we shall never cease to contend, that he does but half discharge his duty as an ambassador, who neglects the opportunity which his local situation affords him, of taking a near view of the intrigues of contending factions, by mixing indiscriminately with the heads of them, and thus of turning their mutual jealousies and dissensions to the benefit of his own country.* It was usual, in the diplomacy

* Whitelocke, in enumerating the duties of an ambassador, observes that, among many other things, "he is also to inform himself of the face and government of the country to which he is sent; the avenues by sea and by land; where it is strong, where it is weak; where dangerous to an enemy; what fortifications it hath by art or nature; what the laws and privileges of the people are; what the trade is; what their militia; their revenue and taxes, whether grievous; what the affections of the people; what factions of the multitude or great men, whether upon grounds of rule or religion; what their foreign leagues are; whether their councils depend only upon the prince, or upon the state of the country. And herein he must be wary, lest he cause jealousy of his diving into the secrets of another state; but he must commend what is commendable, and create a belief of his good wishes and affections to them." For this sensible passage,

of the court of Louis XV. to employ an unaccredited agent, whose reports were a check upon the actual ambassador. Many good effects, perhaps, would be produced by such a system of diplomacy, being adopted in this country.

With more malice than truth, we hope, it has been asserted, that our ambassadors shut themselves up as closely in their hotels, as the Grand Sultan does in his seraglio. Were this assertion true in its utmost latitude, the causes of the French influence, in almost every court on the Continent, prior to its subjugation, might be easily inferred. For if a person were ever so eminent in the talents fit for a diplomatic situation, but so immured himself, his views would necessarily be bound to a narrow focus, compared with him, who made it his chief business to be equally acquainted with the genuine passions, interests, and desires of the favourites of the people and the crown. In some cases, "fas est ab hoste doceri." Had we, then, condescended to imitate France in her policy of only calling the ablest of

see the Appendix to his Journal of the Swedish Embassy, vol. II. p. 459.

her subjects to the post of ambassadors, a policy so obvious, as to have been adopted even in her revolutionary days, and since brought to such fatal perfection, craft would then have been opposed to craft, zeal to zeal, which would have been the only sure way of correcting that turbulent, daring, and wicked spirit, which has rent asunder the contexture of almost every state.

But interest, and not superior merit, is the most efficacious recommendation with us, alike to foreign and domestic posts of great responsibility and honor. Until, therefore, a complete reform be made in that particular, we may look in vain, in the conduct of our affairs abroad, for sagacity in forming plans, firmness in executing them, boldness in encountering difficulties, presence of mind in improving every occasional advantage, and for that cool intrepidity, which cannot be diverted from steadfastly adhering to its object, by any sally of passion, however sudden and extravagant.* In lieu of these

* To establish the Pretender upon the throne of England, Cardinal Alberoni meditated the design of engaging the Czar and the King of Sweden in a war with that country; and when the famous

qualities, we shall be certain, however, of finding an hesitating, formal, and official spirit, which is deliberating, while others are acting, and conceiving, that the vital interests of a nation are best studied and advanced, by a scrupulous attention to those ceremonials, which, to use the emphatic words of Sir William Temple, himself a master of the diplomatic science, “seems to have been only raised and cultivated by those men, who wanting other talents to value themselves in the employments of Ambassadors, endeavoured to do it by exactness or nicety in the forms.* Now such punctilios, in their consequences, remind us forcibly of the old tactics, by which, the Prussians confidently imagined they

Lord Harrington carried to him a list of ships then lying before Barcelona, which were to act against it, if he persisted in his attempt of embroiling the peace of Europe, the rage of Alberoni was so excessive, that he snatched the paper from the hands of the ambassador, and tore it into a thousand pieces. Not the least disconcerted by this unexpected act, Lord Harrington calmly proceeded with the thread of his discourse, *et comme je disois, Monseigneur*. For this anecdote, see *Memoires du Cardinal Alberoni*, p. 96. Such deliberate coolness is deserving of praise and imitation, for oftentimes the safety and welfare of nations depend upon it.

* See Temple's Works, vol. II. p. 387.

should beat the French. But before the former had even performed one of their tardy evolutions, the quickness and energy of the latter had enabled them to discharge their pieces, and rout their ranks.

Co-existent with such predilection for stiff etiquette, or rather arising out of it, is a disposition, so proud and unbending, as even to indispose those against us, who might else be inclined from disappointment, hatred, or other motives, to espouse our interests in the most open and cordial manner. The necessity, indeed, of a negociator professing conciliating qualities, in critical and delicate missions, has been lately so deeply felt, that it is impossible to enumerate the evils which have been occasioned to all Europe for the want of them. No man, perhaps, better understood or practised the rare art of living with his enemies, in such a way, as if they were one day to be his friends, than the celebrated Lord Chesterfield. In this respect, as in many others, his diplomatic career may be quoted as a model for those, who profess to think, that the terms conciliating and dignified, are utterly irreconcilable. And how subservient to the interests of

his country he made those feelings, and that language of conciliation, which he uniformly evinced towards his public foes, may be partly attested by the following passage, which, though long, is too important to be mutilated.

“ Abbé de la Ville had abilities, temper, and industry. We could not visit, our two masters being at war ; but the first time I met him at a place, I got somebody to present me to him ; and I told him, that though we were to be national enemies, I flattered myself we might, however, be personal friends. Two days afterwards, I went early to solicit the deputies of Amsterdam, where I found Abbé de la Ville, who had been beforehand with me ; upon which I addressed myself to the deputies, and said smilingly, I am very sorry, gentlemen, to find my enemy with you ; my knowledge of his capacity is already sufficient to fear him, we are not upon equal terms, but I trust to your own interests against his talents ; if I have not had this day the the first word, I shall at least have the last. They smiled ; the Abbé was pleased with the compliment, and the manner of it. He stayed about a quarter

of an hour, and then left me to my deputies, with whom I continued upon the same tone, though in a very serious manner. I told them that I was only come to state their own true interests to them plainly and simply, without any of those arts which it was necessary for my friend to make use of to deceive them. I carried my point, and continued my procédé with the Abbé, and by this easy and polite commerce with him, at third places, I often found means to fish out from him whereabouts he was.”*

Another evil, of no small magnitude, also arising from an Ambassador's accustoming himself to unsocial habits, and to an unbending and unaccommodating tone, is the following one: That, if he entertains a suspicion that some secret league is in agitation, to which he is not allowed to be privy, from some of its operations being detrimental to the interests of his own country, no other chance is presented to him of discovering it, than that of offering a large bribe to some underling of the court, whose profession is perfidy,

* See Lord Chesterfield's Letters to his Son, Letter 258.

and who, in the end, proves to be as absolute a stranger to the league in question, and to the characters of the actors in it, as the Ambassador himself. Now, assuredly, this is a most weak, clumsy, and ruinous mode of proceeding. Far better would it be, in our humble judgment, for this legal spy, a term which, however humiliating, may yet be applied with the strictest propriety to the functions of an Ambassador, to invite the most eminent persons, of opposite political interests, to his table, where, if he exemplified in his behaviour the famous Italian precept, *volti sciolti et pensieri stretti*, it is more than conjectural, that, in the freedom of intimacy, and in the hilarity of social enjoyment, he would succeed in drawing from some one of his guests, that sort of authentic information, which would either satisfy him his suspicions of a league being formed against his court were without any trace of foundation, or else enable him to take such measures, as would counteract the effects of it. Such craft, if carried into the intercourse of private life, would doubtless entitle those who practised it to the severest reprobation; but, in diplomatic transactions, we are to conclude, it is amply justified

by the principles of state reason ; since personages* have not disdained to resort to it, who, in all other occurrences, manifested a strong repugnance to the arts of dissimulation.

The Athenians forbid, that the names of Harmodius and Aristogiton, who had delivered their country from the tyranny of Hippias and Hipparchus, should ever be given to slaves. If our legislature had decreed, at the commencement of the French revolution, that none should receive pensions for their diplomatic services, but those, whose merits in that department were publicly acknowledged by our enemies, we have no doubt, but that the Ambassadors of this country would have made a

* Sir William Temple (see his Works, vol. I. p. 266) and Lord Horatio Walpole (see Coxe's Memoirs of that Nobleman, p. 465) have both conceived, that the best intelligence was to be obtained in the convivial intercourse of the table. And though the latter was a most rigid economist, yet for that purpose, the same table was always kept in his absence by his secretary. We have been informed as an indisputable fact, that an application which a certain Ambassador made in the morning to Talleyrand, was in the evening granted to his secretary, whose good fortune it was to meet him at a friend's house, and who, in the freedom of familiar conversation, had the skill to seize the favourable moment of urging his request.

greater figure in the eyes of Europe, than they have done for these last ten years.

In short, then, "*exoriantur legati,*" among us, who will shew to Europe at large, that the perfection of diplomatic wisdom and skill does not consist in a scrupulous adherence to antiquated usages, and formalities, and to principles borrowed from less enlightened times, but in a general knowledge of the world, and the ways of men, in a behaviour equally calculated to soften national pride, and prejudices, and to win confidence and esteem, and in that energy, decision, and firmness, which can alone lay the foundation of successful conduct, in public as well as private affairs.

ESSAY X.

Of the Duties of Attornies.

IF the importance of a man in the scale of civil society, be weighed according to his power of injuring or benefiting his fellow-citizens, and such a mode of estimate is pretty generally formed, it will then appear, that those who follow the profession of attornies, may reasonably arrogate to themselves, no small pretensions to public notice. To demonstrate the justice of this observation, we shall proceed to deduce the origin and nature of the legal functions of an Attorney; and then presume to suggest a line of conduct for his adoption, which would not impoverish his usual stock of gains, and yet entitle him to the respect and gratitude of his clients.

An Attorney at law, so called from *atornatus*, which word implies, to be put in the turn of an-

other, corresponds to the procurator or proctor of the civilians, or canonists. In periods, when each man took upon himself to avenge his private wrongs, summary justice could be easily exercised. Every suitor, therefore, was then obliged to appear in person, to prosecute or defend his suit, we believe, without exception, unless the king's letters patent authorized his absence. But as soon as the litigious disposition of men increased, and very soon we may suppose that to have happened, it was found expedient to permit attornies to prosecute or defend any action in the absence of the parties to the suit.

To modern times, however, we must look for the exertions of that corps being called forth by suitable encouragements. For our ancestors had such frequent recourse to the simple dictates of nature and of reason, in the adjustment of their disputes, that an act of parliament passed in the thirty-third year of the reign of Henry III. expressly states, that, before that period, there had not been more than six or eight attornies in Norfolk, or Suffolk; in which time, it remarks, *great tranquillity* had

reigned ;* but the number had increased to twenty-four, to the great prejudice and vexation of those counties. It therefore enacted, that there should be only six Attornies in Norfolk, six in Suffolk, and two in the city of Norwich.

It is a truth, as rare as it is glorious, that England is, perhaps, the only country upon the face of the earth, in which justice, civil and criminal, is administered with purity. And happy should we be to add, that cheapness and dispatch were likewise the inseparable concomitants of our judicature. But the fact is not to be denied, however it may be lamented, that the volumes of our law books are swollen to such an enormous bulkiness, that few purses can procure them ; and are so contradictory one to another, in their sense, that still fewer capacities can digest them. When one volume, therefore, brings us out of a labyrinth, the next, per-

* Quo tempore magna tranquillitas regnabat.—See Blackstone's Commentaries, vol. III. p. 25. The learned editor, Mr. Christian, adds, that as it does not appear this statute was ever repealed, it might be curious to enquire how it was originally evaded.—Note 11.

haps, will plunge us into another, more difficult to unravel, than the famous Cretan maze. In short, such is the multiplicity and intricacy of the statutes, the variety of reports, the nicety of conveyancing, the dexterity of pleading, and the confusion, uncertainty, and expence these occasion; that after the defendant in a cause has obtained a verdict in his favour, he is, perhaps, beggared by his success. The well known line of Dr. Young may be quoted, and, alas! be reckoned no paradox:—

“ He is redressed, till he is undone.”

If, then, the sons of sophistry and chicanery be so successful in their arts, as to make fraud sometimes assume before juries* the garb of honesty, and

* The unanimity required by a verdict in this country, in order to make it legal, may, perhaps, in the case of a pleader blinding the judgment of an obstinate and tenacious juryman, by the arts above-mentioned, be productive of much real injustice. We are not ignorant, that the sages of the law affirm, this unanimity gives great credit and weight to a verdict. But our wise ancestors, it will be remembered, thought otherwise, in the times of Henry I. Henry II. and Edward I. For then if the jurors dissented, sometimes there was added a number equal to the greater party, and they were to give up their verdict by twelve of the old jurors, and the jurors so added.

so totally devoid of integrity; as never to reconcile the common law to common sense, but when it promotes their own private advantage, and so habituated to embrace the bad side, that their tongues, like swivel guns, are ready to be directed against every quarter; we must attribute no small share of an evil pregnant with such afflicting and mischievous consequences, to the conduct of attornies or solicitors.* All general observations are, doubtless, liable to exceptions. Nevertheless the fact is notorious, that, although the majority, perhaps, of those, who make our laws their study, illustrate and confirm in their daily practice, the established maxim that *Actus legi nulli facit injuriam*, yet the most plenary evidence can be produced of numbers in the profession realizing the picture just now drawn.

In proportion, then, to the mischiefs arising from the scandalous abuses exemplified by this decription of persons, ought to be our indignation against those who do all in their power to form and bring

* These names are indiscriminately used by most writers; yet, legally speaking, he only can be called a solicitor who is admitted to practise in the Court of Chancery.

them to maturity. Without acquiescing in the pernicious saying, that where much is alledged, something must be true; we can, however, admit the veracity of the assertion, that many attornies are not only a disgrace to their profession, but a dishonour to mankind. Nor do we conceive it very uncharitable in us to suspect, that few of them, on the eve of being inrolled, are mindful of that statute in the fourth year of the reign of Henry IV. which enjoins, that none are to be admitted into their order, but such as are virtuous, learned, and sworn to their duty. In extenuation of overlooking that statute in their conduct, and substituting low artifice and obsequious insincerity in the place of disinterested honesty, it is but just to add, that the whole of the fault does not center with them, but some part of it must be given to that class of clients whose riches are equal to their litigiousness, and want of honour superior to both. Such men as these, and the race, it is to be regretted, is very prolific, always wish to make, and often succeed in making, their attornies disregard every consideration of humanity and probity, which may obstruct the gaining of their cause; and always are accustomed

to measure out their reward to them, according to the degree of villainy they have displayed for gaining their ends. While wealth, then, is in the habit of being converted to such purposes, are we to expect that the grievances which the public have so long and so justly complained of, will soon cease. Can it excite wonder, if the baits thrown out by those opulent wretches (for, with them, "*quid salvis infamia nummis*") to a young man who has a fortune to seek, and a family to maintain, have not a powerful effect in determining the character of his principles. He must be little read in the volume of human nature, who cannot discover, that the temptation to become an instrument of fraud and violence is too great for him to withstand. Let us not, then, in expressing our detestation, of the effects of their proceedings, forget also to arraign the causes of them.

It is an observation, the truth of which has been so generally admitted, as even to have passed into a proverb, that a knave is only fit to be employed in the concerns of the law. What a seeming inconsistency is here asserted, and how humbling to the dignity of the human character, that an honest

man should be esteemed the most improper character to be employed in a profession, with which the existence and support of society are so inseparably connected.

To rescue, then, the character of attornies from this degrading imputation, and to enable them more often to apply to their conduct the honourable words of Rightly, in the Heiress, “When I detect wrong, and vindicate the sufferer, I feel the spirit of the law of England, and the pride of a practitioner,” we shall venture to think, that the practice of the following rules, would go no inconsiderable way to secure that most important and desirable end.

The law, in its origin, was doubtless designed to distribute right to every one; and this is strongly expressed in the Greek word νομος.* The uniform observance, therefore, of the principles of honesty in their dealings, we would, in the first place, endeavour to impress upon the minds of attornies. For though particular points of interest may some-

* ΑΠΟ ΤΩ ΝΕΜΕΙΝ—a distribuendo.

times be accomplished by indirect cunning, yet it must be generally admitted, that he who deviates from the path of honesty, will seldom find this deviation rewarded by superior good fortune. To execute his business with reputation, an attorney ought never to lose sight of those plain, simple, and irrefragable principles of justice, on which, all law is, or ought to be founded. He should, therefore, employ his utmost means, to discourage suits for trivial or vexatious demands. He should manifest himself so great a lover of truth, as to set his face decidedly against the production of those sort of witnesses, who are disposed to think, that a lie is pardonable, if it be serviceable. He should feel an abhorrence of brow-beating and intimidating the adverse party, or of taking an advantage of an oversight in his counsel, or attorney, or of want of form in the pleadings, unless when he is on the defensive side, and his client's cause is the cause of injured justice. He should not pride himself on his dexterity in the infamous arts of misleading the court, prolonging the cause, or enhancing the costs, though at the expence of the opponent. And he deserves to be pointed out to the scorn and exe-

cration of every honest man, if he encourages an appeal from court to court, without having the strongest conviction on his mind, that the decision was completely unsatisfactory in the point of substantial justice. To be true, also, to his own fame, and to the sacred rules of justice, if, while the suit is pending, he should discover that his client's claim or defence is ill-grounded, he ought not to shrink from delivering it as his decisive opinion, that the suit should be dropped against his adversary, and with the same explicit plainness he should add, if such adversary be poor or aggrieved, by having his just right withheld from him, that ample remuneration is strictly his due. It might likewise be fairly said, that he was hostile to every principle of humanity, who did not advise his client to be merciful, when the law had securely fixed him on the *vantage ground*,

In all criminal prosecutions, an attorney ought ever to keep in mind, that though it is a primary part of his duty to be prompt and resolute against hardened and daring offenders, yet he is not less bound to abstain from employing all reprehensible

expedients for their condemnation. In giving advice on mortgages, or in any pecuniary concerns, he would deservedly have much odium to bear, who is not earnest from motives of compassion alone, abstracted from all legal considerations, in discontinuing usury, and every improper advantage taken of the necessitous. When the debtor is insolvent, it is the obvious duty of the attorney to promote equality in the payments. And when it is clear that a man [has fallen into poverty, by an unavoidable series of misfortunes, that circumstance ought to operate upon the attorney, and call him to step forward voluntarily, in mitigating any excess of persecution and hostility, on the part of his creditors.

An attorney who cannot preserve a profound secrecy in settlements, and in family transactions, may be considered as not only to have been guilty of one of those improprieties, which are the objects of simple disapprobation, but of one of those acts which entitle him to meet the severest reprehension, from the afflicting, and oftentimes fatal consequences, which such a violation of trust occasions.

That many wives, daughters, and sons, have well-grounded reasons to deplore, deeply to deplore, the commanding influence possessed by attorneys over their husbands and parents, in the disposition of their estates by will, is an assertion unfortunately too true, we fear, to be controverted. According, then, to the amiableness or wickedness of the character of the attorney, will be the great and irreparable good or evil done by him. If he be actuated by virtuous intentions, instead of dwelling upon any hasty sally of resentment dropped by a wife or child against a husband or parent, in an unguarded moment, and thereby administering fuel to a flame, which would otherwise have died away of itself, he will omit the mention of no circumstance which is likely to restore peace and happiness between them. In short, it will excite in his heart, sentiments of the most deep and sincere disappointment and anguish, to see any one disinherited, or deprived of his just portion, through passion, caprice, or an unforgiving temper. Where extreme old age, or long sickness, can give birth even to the most distant suspicion of the testator's intellects being affected, an upright attorney will take espe-

cial care to procure witnesses of the most spotless reputation. And under these circumstances, if he does not discourage all artful requests which may be made to such a person to bequeath his wealth to charitable uses, his conduct will not be more offensive to the opinions of honest and reflecting men, than prejudicial to the interests of the surviving relations.

If an attorney would thus discharge his duty, his profession would then command that respect which it really deserves. And the justice of the complaint be no longer recognized, at least be confined to a few, that the prosperity of attorneys is a libel upon the nation.

We are not to be told, that for an attorney to act in the manner we have pointed out, he has to encounter the low interests, the passions, the prejudices, and oftentimes the unjust reproaches of mankind. In addition to these trials, no very easy ones to surmount, another will present itself, in which it is still more difficult to attain success; namely, that of acquiring such a complete dominion

over his own passions, as to be inaccessible to every present and apparent interest, that may in the least endanger the establishment of his fame as an upright man. But in thus endeavouring to stand forward in the cause of reason, and justice, and to exert his utmost to serve his fellow-creatures, should he be after all disappointed of his reward from the good and virtuous, he will, nevertheless, secure what is, however, of still more importance, the approbation of his own conscience, and that of the Supreme Legislator and Judge of the Universe.

ESSAY XI.

*On the Conduct and Character of Christina, Queen
of Sweden.*

THERE are few sovereigns in modern Europe, who have been the subject of more applause and censure than Christina, Queen of Sweden. The voluntary abdication of her throne, has been viewed by some, in no other light than as an infamous desertion of her public duties, for the indulgence of ease, and for the enjoyment of private pleasure ; although others have professed to discern in that act, the rare and laudable moderation of the true philosopher. Her conversion to the Romish church filled one half of Europe with grief, shame, and indignation, and has induced the Protestants too hastily to assert, that her mind, in the choice of her religion, was only influenced by a sense of interest. While, from that circumstance alone, the Catholics

saw a thousand excellencies in her character, in which they would otherwise have found, perhaps, nothing but what was calculated to create alarm, or to excite disgust. Her real learning has not been more suspected, than her real chastity: although the most unbounded panegyrics have been heaped upon both. In short, every great and good quality has been bestowed upon Christina by the zeal of her adherents; and every bad one, by the malice of her enemies,

But though the immoderate aversion of several Protestant writers had led them into unjustifiable extremes, in speaking of Christina, yet it must be confessed, that the character of the daughter of Gustavus is too ambiguous to merit the too ponderous quartos of her historian Arckenholtz.* It is not our design then to fill whole pages with a tedious enumeration, as he has done, of every trifling event in her varied life, yet with such a guide, and with the copious materials which he has provided, we may be enabled, in the shape of an historical essay,

* See *Memoires sur Christine Reine de Suede*, a Amsterdam, 1751.

to lay before our readers those parts of her public and private life, which are most deserving of their notice.

Christina was scarce six years old, when a ball at Lutzen, put an end to the victorious career of her renowned father, Gustavus Adolphus, who had carried the desolation of war from the centre of Bohemia to the mouth of the Scheld, from the banks of the Po to the coasts of the Baltic, and had displayed to the oppressor of Germany, the Emperor Ferdinand, the tremendous uncertainty of human greatness. In the plan which the celebrated Oxenstiern, the friend and minister of that great hero, drew out for the regency, we may discern a regard for the rights of the nobility, and for the liberties of the people, which reflects honour upon his memory, as it shews his dislike to that form of government, which invests an individual with an unlimited authority.

At a very early age, Christina is represented to have evinced a remarkable thirst of knowledge. We are solicited to believe, that in her infancy she had

made such great proficiency in the Greek tongue, as to be capable of reading Thucidydes and Polybius, and of comparing the different merits of those historians. By the particular wish of the estates of Sweden, a great portion of her time was also devoted to the study of the Bible, as that Book, they justly observe, in an express memoir, is the source of all other histories. It will not be expected, or desired, that we should enter into any detail upon the minority of Christina, nor upon the reciprocal and perhaps equally just complaints between her and her allies, when she had taken the reins of government into her own hands; as the relation of those circumstances would extend this Essay beyond its proper limits.

One of the first acts of Christina's reign, which we esteem worthy of remembrance, was, her confirming the title which Grotius had received from the Chancellor Oxenstiern, of Ambassador to France. By the fury of political and religious factions, that illustrious scholar had been driven from his country, and obliged to seek an asylum in France. Upon his coming there, Cardinal Richelieu had given him

a pension, but soon withdrew it, because he did not flatter his literary talents.* Grotius had, however, attracted the notice of Gustavus Adolphus, and, after his quitting France, he was received at his court, with every mark of respect suitable to his distinguished merit. In ratifying, then, the appointment of her chancellor, Christina had the satisfaction of rewarding a man of real genius and virtue, in a manner correspondent with her greatness, of mortifying the Hollanders, whom she disliked, and of deeply wounding the pride of the Cardinal, by enabling the object of his aversion to treat him with all the familiar freedom of an equal.

[1647.] Devoted to letters, and possessed not of the warlike spirit of her father, it is easy to conceive; that the Queen of Sweden should feel extremely anxious for the conclusion of the peace of Westphalia. The obstacles which retarded that

* The chief cause of the Cardinal's displeasure against Grotius, arose from his having omitted to praise him in the Dedication of his immortal Treatise, *De Jure Belli et Pacis*, which he inscribed to Louis XIII. of France.

event, arose more, however, from the animosity and jealousy of the different ministers, than even from the infinite variety of interests, which they had to adjust. Count Oxenstiern, son of the great chancellor, and Alder Salvius, chancellor of the court, were the plenipotentiaries of Sweden, and greater division did not exist between them, than among those of France and Germany. The first was by no means disposed to exert his abilities for the effecting a general peace, because he considered the continuation of the war as no less favourable to the glory of Sweden, than prejudicial to the selfish views of France. On the other hand, Salvius, the favourite of the Queen, warmly entered into all her wishes upon that subject, and therefore endeavoured, as far as lay in his power, to frustrate the designs of his colleague. We are told of a discourse, Christina made to the senate, when she appointed Salvius a member of that august assembly, although he was of mean extraction, which ought to be engraved in the hearts of all kings. "When it is a question of good advice and safe counsels," said she, "we do not demand sixteen descents, but what is to be done. The abilities of

Salvius would, doubtless, still be conspicuous, if he could deduce his origin from persons of family. He must then esteem it an honour, that no other reproach can be made against him, but the want of high birth. The assistance, however, of able men is required by us; if, then, the sons of rank possess talents, they will make their fortunes as well as those, whose strong claims of merit, must likewise supersede the ideal prerogatives of family."

[A.D. 1648.] The peace of Westphalia was at last accomplished, to the reciprocal satisfaction of the greater part of the interested powers. No one, however, was so violent in his expressions of anger against the promoters of it, as Innocent X, for by that event, were all his ambitious views thwarted, which he had formed, as sovereign pontiff, of humbling the pride of the Protestants. As a public proof of his displeasure against the active part which Christina had taken in that important affair, he published a bull, in which he refused her the title of the Queen of Sweden, and caused his nuncio at Vienna to post it upon the gates of that city; but the Emperor ordered it to be torn down.

Innocent prudently offered no second attack with his spiritual weapons against Christina.

Several advantageous proposals of marriage were now made to Christina; but her love of freedom prevailed over any temporary inclination she might have felt for that state. The King of Spain, Philip IV. was one of those, who sought her hand, but he soon dropped his pretensions, on the consideration, that if his suit were successful, it would oblige him to abstain from treating the Protestants as heretics. The courtship paid to her by her cousin, Charles Gustavus, the Prince Palatin, was the most agreeable to the Swedish nation. But, whatever was the motive, she soon came to the resolution of declining his proposals. In order, however, that a stop might be put to the importunate addresses which she received from her people, to fix her choice of a husband, she prevailed on the estates of Sweden to declare Charles Gustavus her successor. By this step, she at once freed herself from any further troublesome applications, on the part of her people, to change her condition, ensured tranquillity to Sweden,

and prevented all disputes with regard to the accession.

[A.D. 1650.] The excessive attachment shewn by Christina to men of genius and learning, urged her to seek the correspondence and society of the celebrated Descartes; who was put in the expurgatory Index at Rome, for having believed the astronomical observations on the movement of the earth, rather than the bulls of the Popes, and who was persecuted in Holland, for having substituted the true method of philosophizing, in the room of the jargon of the schools. The precursor of Newton hesitated a long time whether he should accept her invitation, as he put his liberty at so high a price, that, according to his usual expression, all the kings of the world could not purchase it. The difference of climates, also, was another principal reason, which deterred him from undertaking a voyage to Stockholm. In his letter upon this occasion, to M. Chanut, the French ambassador in Sweden, and a most intimate friend, he observes, that a man born in the gardens of Touraine, and retired in a land where he had less of honey indeed, but perhaps more of milk,

than in the promised land of the Israelites, could not easily resolve to quit it, in order to live in a country of bears, among rocks and ice.

After some further delays and excuses, the philosopher, however, thought proper to repair to the Swedish court. His reception there was such as must have gratified his utmost pride. The Queen exempted him from all the subjection and restraint which are imposed upon courtiers, as she presently found, they were not suited to his temper or character. At five in the morning, she commenced her studies with him, for the first part of the day was invariably devoted to the improvement of her understanding. As the chief of a sect, Descartes expected all his opinions and his tastes to be adopted by his disciples. It did not, therefore, meet his approbation, that Christina should turn occasionally from philosophy to the study of languages. He could not, also, conceal his dislike, at her being surrounded with such a crowd of pedants, as led strangers to say, that Sweden would soon be governed by grammarians. So freely did he remonstrate with her on these two points, that he drew

upon himself the resentment of Vossius, the instructor of the Queen in the Greek tongue, of whom, our Charles the Second said, in derision of his incredulity and superstition, that he believed every thing except the Bible. Christina did not, however, so far comply with the application of Descartes, as to abandon her Greek books, although she gave him such an obliging answer upon this subject, that he still retained hopes of her submitting in the end to his wishes. In the mean time, she expressed such uncommon sentiments of regard for him, and heaped so many marks of her favour upon him, that, according to the scandalous reports of the times, the grammarians of Stockholm accelerated his death by poison. But science, we must believe, has too close a connection with virtue, for the commission of atrocious crimes to be often found in the lives of scholars.

Christina now began to find, that, as Queen of Sweden, more important tasks were allotted to her than those of studying the learned languages, and paying attention to learned foreigners. The embarrassed state of the public finances, occasioned by

her indiscriminate liberality, paved the way for general discontent; and her imperious conduct in her family, and court, and amorous propensities, rendered her both odious and disgusting in the eyes of good and reflecting men.

[1651.] These unpleasant circumstances seemed to have hastened her design of resigning the sceptre into the hands of her kinsman, Charles Gustavus, for we find that in this year, she made a public communication of this intention to the senate. The united solicitations of her appointed successor and subjects, who still contemplated the daughter of the great Gustavus with sentiments of affection and reverence, in spite of all her imprudencies and excesses, obliged her, however, to continue, for some time longer, the exercise of the royal authority.

Some writers pretend, that in the following year, 1652, Christina began to give the most unequivocal proofs of her intention to abandon the faith of her ancestors. But the moment of grace was certainly not yet arrived. For, in an highly complimentary letter, which M. Godeau, Bishop of Venice, ad-

dressed to her that year, she, in answer to it, after saying to him, that the good folks of France were so accustomed to flatter, that she dares not complain of so general a custom, and therefore she was not surprized at receiving his praises, although she is thankful for them, proceeds to express a wish, that his mind possessed the same light as her's did upon matters of religion.* Now this is surely a very unsuitable declaration to fall from one upon the eve of becoming a Catholic. And in a letter, which she wrote in the same year to Prince Frederic of Hesse, to dissuade him from embracing the Roman religion, we may discern the same decided inclination to the Protestant communion.

The strong attachment which Christina really felt to the cause of letters, and the undistinguishing patronage which she gave to its professors, very naturally excited the highest applauses from the

* Il y à long tems que je suis persuadée que les choses que je crois sont celles que l'on doit croire. Ce seroit plutôt à moi à souhaiter que parmi tant de belles lumieres dont votre ami est éclairé, vous eussiez encore celles que j'ai sur cette matiere.— See Memoires sur Christine, tom. I. p. 215.

literati of Sweden, and of other countries. But in the two hundred panegyrics which M. Arckenholtz reckons to have been bestowed upon Christina, we may in vain look for her real character. In her intercourse with men of learning, she departed so widely from the dignity of the Queen, and became so much of the pedant in petticoats, that her intellectual attainments, so far from producing her any real glory, may be said, in a great measure, to have diminished the lustre of her character, as a sovereign. The levity, too, or rather licentiousness of behaviour, in which she so often indulged before them, must have even secretly inspired the disgust of those men, who were led equally by inclination and interest, to dissemble her vices, and proclaim her real or pretended virtues. Of this disposition to speak, and to act, in the company of men of learning, in a manner inconsistent with the modesty of a female, innumerable instances remain. But the following one, will be quite sufficient to confirm this assertion. Salmasius, so renowned for his critical skill, and extensive and profound knowledge of languages, whom Milton pleased himself with the malignant idea of having killed in their last

dispute, was one of the first scholars who had visited the court of Christina, and possessed, in a remarkable degree, the esteem and confidence of his royal pupil. It happened once, that she paid him a visit during a fit of illness, and found him in bed, reading a book, which, upon her entrance, he immediately closed. "Ha, ha," said the Queen, "let us see what engages your attention. Come, shew us some good passages." Salmasius having pointed out one of the best, she cast her eye over it, and afterwards said to her favourite Sparre, better known by the name of La belle Comtesse, who accompanied her on this occasion, "Come hither, Sparre, and look at this fine book of devotion, entitled, *Le Moyen de parvenir*. Come, now, read us this page." But Sparre had not proceeded three lines, before the indecency of the language obliged her to stop. Her blushes, however, and confusion, only served to heighten the Queen's pleasure, and, almost convulsed with laughter, she insisted upon her finishing the page, in spite of every remonstrance she made against the uncommonly offensive expressions in it.*

* See this anecdote in Menagiana, Tom. IV. p. 328.

The moment was at length arrived, when the fatigues and cares of sovereignty became so insupportable to Christina, that no persuasions could induce her to bear them any longer. The many hours she was obliged to allot to the discharge of the various duties of her high station, had so completely oppressed her spirits, and preyed upon her health, that when the secretaries brought her dispatches to sign, she fancied, to borrow one of her curious expressions, she *saw the devil*. In the following letter, which she addressed to M. Chanut, upon her resolution of abdicating the crown, there is an affectation of superior sagacity, and an ostentatious approbation of her conduct, by no means compatible with the modesty of conscious merit. "In retiring from the stage," said she, "I give myself no uneasiness about the plaudits. I know that the scene which I have represented, is not according to the common laws of the theatre. But a masculine and vigorous design rarely pleases all descriptions of persons. I permit, however, every one to judge according to his genius. I cannot, indeed, take away this liberty, and would not, if it were in my power." In another part of the letter, she

seems inclined to treat with a supercilious contempt, all those, who should presume to shew their displeasure at the step she was about to take. While the truth of this remark has certainly been much and justly disputed by an unbiassed posterity. "I have preferred the conservation of the state before all other considerations, and have sacrificed every thing with joy to its interests, and have nothing to reproach myself in that administration, which I possessed without pride, and abandon with facility.

Before, however, Christina had resigned the sceptre into the hands of Charles Gustavus, an act which has been so variously accounted for by the ingenious conjectures of contemporary historians, but which, after all, may be most safely and reasonably ascribed to the desire of freedom, and to an aversion from the toils of government, we are told, that she made an attempt to place her successor in such a precarious and dependent situation, that, had he not firmly resisted it, he could only have been considered as her representative. She wished to be fixed in a state of absolute independence; to have

the liberty of remaining in any part of Sweden she pleased ; to see no change in the appointments which she had made ; and to reserve for herself the greater part of the kingdom. This last condition seems to have originated from the advice which Whitelocke, the ambassador of Cromwell, gave, when she intimated to him her design of abdicating the crown. “ To be warned by the conduct of Philip to his father Charles V. after his abdication ; and, therefore, to reserve that country in her possession, out of which her reserved revenue should be issued ; for when money is to be paid out of a prince’s treasury,” adds the ambassador, “ it is not always ready and certain.”* When Christina found that Charles would not condescend to become a mere titular king, she had the art of turning her propositions into a compliment to him, by saying, that she made them with no other view, but to discover

* If Whitelocke does not deliver his sentiments with the dignity of an ambassador, it must be at least acknowledged that he speaks with the freedom of a man. Especially in that part of the conversation, where he tells her, “ that the same persons who now fawn upon her, she must expect to find, when she is no longer queen, disposed to put affronts and scorn upon her.”—See his *Journal on the Swedish Embassy*, vol. I. p. 366.

his real character, and that she was now perfectly satisfied, that Charles Gustavus was worthy to reign, since he so well understood the rights of a monarch.

A few days before her departure from Sweden, Christina caused a medal to be struck, the legend of which, must have excited a smile of contempt from her ambitious successor—"That Parnassus was better than a throne." When she had reached a small stream on the frontiers of Sweden, which separated Denmark from that kingdom, she waved her hand, and exclaimed, "At last I behold myself at liberty, and out of Sweden, whither I hope never to return again."

As the constitution of Christina was inured to fatigue, by hunting and other strong exercises, she performed the greater part of her journey, through Denmark and Germany, on horseback, clad in a male attire. To whatever town she came, the people flocked in multitudes to see the woman who passed, in the judgment of many, for the most shining constellation of her age. The singularity

of her dress attracted as much notice, as the freedom of her manners. She usually appeared in the waist-coat, hat, and collar of a man, with a black ribbon carelessly tied around her neck, and with a short petticoat, which descended no lower than the middle part of her leg. We are likewise informed, for these trifles have been detailed with a minute importance by many writers, that she bowed upon introductions, and paid her compliments after the style of a man. The enemies of Christina have not confined their misrepresentations to the qualities of her mind, but have extended them to her person. If we listen to them, we must believe, that her figure was deformed, her complexion sallow, her eyes dim-sighted, her nose of a most preposterous length,* and the colour of her teeth, the very opposite of pearly whiteness. But in the fair and impartial narrative of Whitelocke, we learn, that if she did not possess all the beauty of her sex, her countenance was animated, and interesting; “and though her

* Son nez est plus long que son pied.—See this hyperbolic expression in *La Vie de Christine, Rêyne de Suede, à Stockholm*, 1667, p. 39.

person was of the smaller size; yet her mien and carriage were very noble.”*

[1655.] Already had Christina prepared for the change of her religion, by visiting all the monasteries and churches which she found in her route. At length, after having embraced the Roman Catholic Faith, at Brussels, she publicly abjured Lutheranism in the cathedral church of Inspruck,† and took this device, which left a doubt in the minds of many, if she was not virtually, as much a pagan as a papist—*Fata viam invenient*.

The proselytism of Christina, like her abdication, was equally the theme of panegyric and invective. The highest praises were of course bestowed on this act by the Catholics; while the Protestants pretended, that she was indifferent to all religions, and convenience was the only motive which influenced her to embrace Popery; since, by professing its tenets, she was more fully enabled to gratify the wish

* See Journal of the Swedish Embassy, vol. I. p. 235.

† For a detailed account of the ceremonies attending her conversion, see History of the Queen of Swedland, p. 150—166.

she had, to spend the remainder of her life in Italy, the favoured abode of the arts and sciences. In proof of this indifference, they relate, that in Sweden, it was her usual custom during the performance of divine service, if the discourse of the minister did not please her, to play with two favourite spaniels, which generally attended upon such occasions, or to chat with some of her attendants, or else to express her impatience by making such a noise with her fan, as could not have been otherwise interpreted by the priest, than into a mandate for his immediate silence.† They likewise affirm, that whenever any allusion was made to the stupendous miracles wrought by Moses, it was her constant saying, that she would undertake to demonstrate the falsehood of the pretended miraculous passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea, by the victory which Numenius, one of the generals of Antiochus, had obtained over the Persians, at the same season, place, and manner, as Moses did over Pharoah, by observing the flux and reflux of that sea.†

* See *La Vie de Christine, Rèyne de Suede*, p. 75.

† Page 16—20.

While, to shew also that she was no more a Catholic than Lutheran, they instanced the reply which she made to the Jesuits of Louvain, when they promised her a place near St. Bridget of Sweden. *“It would afford me more pleasure to obtain a seat among the sages.”*

But though we entertain some suspicions that she never broke out into so daring a tone of infidelity, as to dispute the divine authority of the Bible, yet her excessive admiration of the writings of Plato and of other Greek philosophers, may be supposed to have abated much of the religion, zeal, and devotion, which is said to have marked her early years. It is also certain, that during her stay at Rome, she paid more visits to the works of the great masters in that city, than to Alexander VII. who then filled the papal chair, or to any of the sacred orators. But of all the fine arts, she seems to have possessed a more thorough knowledge of sculpture, than any other, and to have been most delighted with it. It happened one day, while she was admiring a marble statue of the celebrated Chevalier Bernini, which represented Truth, that a cardinal who stood near

to her, took occasion to observe, that she loved Truth more than other princes. "*But all Truths,*" answered she, "*are not of marble.*"

[1656.] An epidemical disorder, which appeared at this time in Rome, gave Christina a fair pretence of gratifying her love of novelty, by taking a journey to France. Being apprized of her intention, the King of France directed that his illustrious visitor should be received with great splendour, in every city through which she passed. Accordingly, all ranks of people vied with each other in offering her tokens of their respect and homage. Upon her arrival at Fontainbleau, she was treated with every distinction due to her royal birth, character, and accomplishments, and, being astonished at the ceremonial of the court, she demanded, upon what account the ladies testified such eagerness to kiss her; "Is it," said she, "*because I resemble a man?*"

During the abode of Christina in France, the men there found, or affected to find, such a combination of endowments in her character, as were never be-

fore united in the same person. But we are instructed to believe, that she was no favourite with her own sex. The ladies of France did not at all relish her keen and pointed remarks, in answer to their obsequious flatteries; or her blunt interrogatories respecting their criminal amours. Her swearing, a vice to which she was much addicted, gave, it must be confessed, just cause of offence to many, while her superior understanding excited the envy of all. Those who pretended best to appreciate her merits, compared her to the castle of Fontainbleau, grand but irregular. Madame de Motteville, who seems, from what reason we are ignorant, to have been animated with a particular ill-will towards her, relates, as a proof, we may suppose, of her depraved taste and passions, that Ninon, the celebrated courtesan, was the only female in France, for whom she shewed any marks of esteem, or visited with any real pleasure.

From Fontainbleau, Christina proceeded to Paris. Having surveyed the city, and received a ceremonial visit from the magistrates, she was presented, by the famous Menage, to the French Academy,

And, as it was esteemed by the literati, a sort of title to celebrity, to be introduced to a Queen, who had descended from her throne in the prime of life for the sake of philosophizing, and who sought the acquaintance of every man of literary reputation with the utmost avidity, Menage, who served as a master of ceremonies to her during the time she remained in Paris, received so many applications to have that honour conferred upon them, that, for fear of offending some, he withheld it from none. This gave Christina to say, that Mr. Menage was acquainted with a great many persons of merit.

[1657.] Fond of balls, ballets, and all the amusements of youth, and likewise delighted with the company and conversation of the learned, Christina, as she could enjoy all those different pleasures in perfection at Paris, felt such regret on quitting it, that she had scarce revisited Italy, before she again returned to France. This second journey to that kingdom was undertaken, as was alledged, for political purposes. But it was only remarkable for the commission of a deed, which has deservedly handed down the memory of Christina to the execration of

posterity; the murder of Monaldeschi, her chief equerry. Every circumstance attending the death of this unfortunate nobleman, so strongly marks the savage vindictive spirit of the Queen, as cannot but excite the utmost horror and disgust in the mind of the humane reader.

On the tenth of November this bloody scene was performed, in the gallery of Les Cerfs, in the palace of Fontainebleau.* Father Le Bel, an eye witness, and relater of it, informs us, that, upon that day, he was conducted by a domestic of the Queen's into the above-mentioned gallery, where he found her, the Marquis, and three other persons, two of whom observed a respectful distance. When the Queen had finished her reproaches against the Marquis, for having betrayed her confidence, which she made him confess he had done, by shewing him his own signature to certain papers; an awful pause ensued, and the assassins drew their swords; at the sight of which, their unhappy victim, in the agony of his despair, pursued the Queen

* The reader will find Father Le Bel's circumstantial account of this affair, in *La Vie de Règne de Suede*, p. 134—154.

to the different parts of the gallery, supplicating for pardon. She listened to him all the time with the utmost coolness, and at last quitted the apartment, having addressed these emphatic words to the priests:—“*Father, I leave you this man, prepare him for his death, and take care of his soul.*” Before, however, this atrocious crime was perpetrated, the chief of the assassins was so deeply moved by the urgent intreaties of the Marquis, as to go in person to the Queen, to try if he could obtain his pardon. Father Le Bel also made the same request, and ventured to hint to her, that she would more consult her reputation by either forgiving the Marquis, or else delivering him into the hands of public justice. But she was too much bent upon the wreaking of her vengeance, to turn a willing ear to any petition or remonstrance which they could offer. When the last moments of the Marquis were over, for the inhumanity of his executioners suffered him to lay some time in the agonies of death, Father Le Bel waited upon the Queen in an adjoining room, where she had remained during the whole of the transaction. And from him we also learn, that such was the amazing ferocity of her

temper, that she dismissed him without manifesting any one sign of remorse for the detestable act she had caused to be done, unless our readers will consider as one, the presenting him with one hundred livres, *to say masses for the soul of the Marquis.*

This deed, which renders the name of Christina infamous in the judgment of posterity, was then, incredible to relate, viewed with such indulgence, that sage lawyers and grave historians have even proposed it as a serious question, whether or no a queen, who has quitted the throne, has not a right to take away the life of her domestics without any legal trial. Among the supporters of this question, which could only have originated from the basest flattery to Christina, we are both astonished and concerned to find the illustrious name of Leibnitz, the man who, in the character of a teacher of jurisprudence, aspired to reform the laws of nature, and of nations. For if we examine into the offence of Monaldeschi, it will surely not be maintained by any writer, in whose breast exist those feelings of compassion, which are natural to all men, that it was of a nature so heinous, as could have been

only expiated by assassination. Some writers, we know, have asserted, that the untimely end of Mo-
naldeschi was occasioned from having boasted pub-
licly of Christina's passion for him ; but others, with
more truth and reason, have attributed it to the
following circumstance:—That the Marquis, anx-
ious to supplant Sentelli, the chief favourite of
Christina, had collected all the various scandalous
tales which were spread abroad respecting them
both ; and having committed them to paper, in a
feigned hand, procured a servant to deliver this
string of calumnies into the hands of the Queen.
An insult, which could only be atoned, in her mind,
by his blood. Well, then, may the remembrance
of such barbarity extort from her, in the hour of
solitude and reflexion, this just but dreadful confes-
sion, “ that we must forget the past, to endure or
enjoy the present, and to resign oneself to that which
is to come.”*

* Il faut oublier le passé, souffrir ou jouir du présent, et se
resigner pour l'avenir. This maxim stands the first in a work
of 52 quarto pages, which Christina composed at Rome, during
the last period of her life.

But as cruelty, to employ another of her sentiments, inspires hatred and contempt, Christina thought proper to shorten her visit to France, in consequence of this affair, although the court might be said to manifest a seeming approbation of it, by its silence. In the looks, however, of many, she read an undisguised abhorrence of her conduct. She, therefore, determined to pay a visit to England. But Cromwell, we are assured, had no sort of inclination to spend the money of his country in giving a splendid reception to a queen, who had resigned three crowns to embrace a religion which he hated, and who, practised in the arts of dissimulation, might succeed in discovering those secrets which it was his interest, as well as duty, to conceal from her knowledge.

After making, then, some further stay in France, Christina at last returned to Rome, where she had full leisure to resign herself to her propensity, or rather passion, for the arts and sciences, particularly chemistry, medals, and statues. While the Cardinal Azzoni, her confidential friend, undertook the management of her finances, which were much de-

ranged, from her excessive profuseness, and the want of regularity in the payment of the pension, which Sweden had settled upon her. Of a temper, however, too restless and intriguing to remain in a state of profound tranquillity, for any length of time, Christina soon embroiled herself in a dispute with the Pope, Alexander VII. respecting the marriage of her favourite Sentinelli and the Dutchess de Ceri. To pacify that vain, frivolous old man, for the active part she had taken in forwarding this match, in direct opposition to his wishes, she occasionally appeared in the public processions, to receive his benediction; and still further to gratify his pride of being thought the author of her conversion, she retired to a convent, that the world might think the love of religion would lead her, in time, to become a nun. While the real motive of this temporary seclusion, was the opportunity it afforded her of escaping, in a great degree, from the troublesome visits of the Pontiff.

The sudden death of King Charles Gustavus, which happened in the commencement of the year 1660, determined Christina once more to revisit

Sweden. Historians ascribe this resolution to a strong desire she felt, at that time of remounting the throne. But her visit, whatever were the views and intentions she had of making it, was attended with the most mortifying and unhappy consequences, both to her as a queen, and a woman. The ancient subjects of Christina had ceased to remember their former love and respect for her, and now only contemplated her as a rash and inconsiderate woman, who had forsaken them, to embrace a religion which they abhorred. The estates of the kingdom, therefore, were not long before they issued orders for the pulling down of her chapel, and the dismissal of the Italian chaplains, who had followed her. Nor would they permit her to quit Sweden, before she had made a second renunciation of her rights to the crown. All these circumstances obliged Christina to return again to Rome; and as, after this violent breach, every hope of retaining something more in Sweden than the appearance of majesty, seemed now at an end, she was rash and indiscreet enough to say, she quitted with pleasure a country, filled with so many knaves, tyrants, and heretics.*

* It is worthy of remark, that there are no words in our lan-

The greater part of Italy was then thrown into the utmost consternation, by the Turks having attacked the Island of Candia. And such were the great but ineffectual efforts made by the Queen of Sweden to procure Venice supplies of troops and money from the princes of Europe, that many were uncharitable enough to suspect her laudable exertions in behalf of that republic, were to be placed only to the most interested motives.

Shortly afterwards, the famous affair of the Corses happened; in which the King of France obliged the Pope to disband his guards, for having offered

guage, which have been so much strained by abuse from their original innocent purport, to their present opprobrious signification, as these three words—knaves, tyrants, and heretics. The word *knave* is of Saxon derivation, and, in its original sense, meant any kind of serving man. In an old English translation of the Bible, called sometimes, Archbishop Cranmer's edition of it, St. Paul is denominated the *knave* of Christ. Every Latin scholar knows that the word tyrant, in its original signification, meant no more than a king, though it is now invariably used to denote an usurper or oppressor. The word heretic, or heresy, is derived from the Greek verb *αἵρεσις*, which signifies to chuse. In the original sense of this term, no odious idea was affixed to it, as we find that Josephus calls the sect of the Pharisees, a heresy, though he himself was a Pharisee.

an insult to his ambassador at Rome; and not content with this humiliating atonement, compelled him to send his nephew to ask pardon, and also to erect a monument in his own capital, of the expulsion of the Corses, his guards. Christina was employed by Alexander as his intercessor in this serious affair; and he had soon reason to believe, that her regret was not very sincere, at the ill-success of her applications. His dislike, therefore, to her, manifested itself upon so many occasions, that she took the resolution of once more returning to Sweden. Whilst she was sounding the estates of the kingdom upon that measure, she passed her hours at Rome, in the conversation and society of men of letters; and sometimes amused herself at their expence, by causing the most curious inscriptions to be put upon the legend of medals, which she had struck for this purpose.*

* She had the word MAKELOS put upon one legend. This enigma gave rise to many disputes among the learned men, and consequently afforded much entertainment to Christina. MAKELOS, in case our readers have any curiosity to know the meaning of it, is a pure Swedish word, which admits a double sense, and signifies incomparable, and likewise an unmarried person,

The conditions which the senate placed upon the Queen's return to Sweden, appeared so very hard, that she judged it proper to repair to Hamburgh, and to wait there the opening of the approaching Diet, in order to be ready to avail herself of any circumstance that might contribute to render her negotiations with it successful. But of all the orders of the state, the clergy, strange to relate, seemed more disposed than any other to advance her interests. The rest of the nation, disgusted with her dissimulation and intrigues, used the right which she had given to them, and refused almost all her demands. She then renounced Sweden for ever, and returned to Rome, where she passed the remainder of her days, despising and perpetually at variance with the Pope,* ill-paid by her ancient subjects, forgotten by France, and but little esteemed by that nation which she had preferred to every other. Christina soon perceived, after her abdication, to quote the

* Bishop Burnet relates, in the History of his own Times, vol. II. p. 415, that Christina one day said to him, "that it was certain, the church was governed by the immediate care and providence of God, for none of the four popes she had known, since she came to Rome, had common sense."

words of Nani, the Historian of Venice, “that a queen without a kingdom, was a divinity without a temple, of which the worship is quickly abandoned.”

[A.D. 1686.] In study* and devotion, † in acting by turns the character of a queen, converter, ‡ astrologer, § and in a correspondence with the learned

* It is conjectured by some, that at this time she begun, and by others, finished, her *Reflexions sur la Vie et les Actions de grand Alexander*. It would have been better, perhaps, for her literary reputation, had this work never seen the light.

† She is said to have been much taken with the opinions of the Molinists. The spiritual repose which the author of that religious sect preached, and which then engaged the whole attention of the Inquisition, reminds us of the pleasant saying of the famous Pasquin upon this occasion. “*If we speak, the galley is the consequence; if we write, the gibbet; if we keep ourselves in quietness of mind, the Inquisition. What is to be done, then?*”

‡ She wrote a letter to the celebrated Madame Dacier, for the purpose of exhorting her to turn Catholic, and another to a certain Count Veranau, in which she persuaded him to become a monk.

§ She is said to have been extremely fond of that vain science, notwithstanding it was one of her observations, that for judging of events, terrestrial appeared to her more sure than celestial astrology. And that we must study astrology, as we do medicine, in order to avoid becoming the dupes of either of them.

and great of Europe, were the last years of Christina's life consumed. But, of all her numerous epistolary productions, there is no letter, which reflects more honour upon her memory, than the one she addressed to the Chevalier Terlon, the ambassador of France, in Sweden, in consequence of Louis the Fourteenth having revoked the famous edict of Nantz. In the following passages of this letter, so much sound sense, and real humanity, are discoverable, as cannot but excite a sentiment of regret, in every reflecting mind, that a queen who could think so nobly, should have not testified in her actions and conduct, more regard to promote the general welfare of society.

After stating, that she fears and flatters no one, she thus proceeds:—"Are you fully persuaded of the sincerity of these new converts, the Calvinists? Men of war are strange apostles, and, I think, more proper to kill, to rob, and to violate, than to persuade. I compassionate the people who are committed to their mercy, and I lament the ruin of so many families, and so many honest persons, who are reduced to beggary. Although in error, it seems

to me, that they are more worthy of pity than of hatred. I compare France to a sick person, whose legs and arms are cut off to cure a disease, which a little patience and indulgence would have entirely healed. Nothing is more praiseworthy than the design of converting infidels and heretics ; but the mode here adopted to effectuate that purpose, is exceedingly strange ; and as our blessed Lord has not availed himself of it to convert the world, it certainly cannot be esteemed the best." The letter is concluded by her opposing the conduct of Louis XIV. to his Protestant subjects, to that which he then held towards the Pope.

Some writers have professed to see her attachment to Protestantism in this celebrated letter. And, agreeably to this discovery, they pretend, that Christina, three years afterwards, negociated with the Elector of Brandenburg for an asylum in his dominions, in order that she might more easily carry into execution, her design of returning to the Lutheran religion. But if she really meditated this design, it was stopped short by the hand of nature, since she soon after that time expired. [1689.]

It is pretended, that Christina died with more fortitude and resignation than Queen Elizabeth. But the contrariety* of relations respecting that event, leave it very doubtful in what manner she met her doom. Of this, however, there can be no dispute, that she would have obtained an higher summit of glory in the estimation of prosperity, had she more imitated that illustrious personage in her steady support of Protestantism; in her zeal, patriotism, and skill in government; in her wise frugality; impartial friendship; heroic firmness; and enlightened taste for the arts and sciences.

* It is asserted by several writers, and with much appearance of truth, that her last moments were greatly disturbed by the recollection of her barbarity to Monaldeschi.

FINIS.

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See Cabinet.





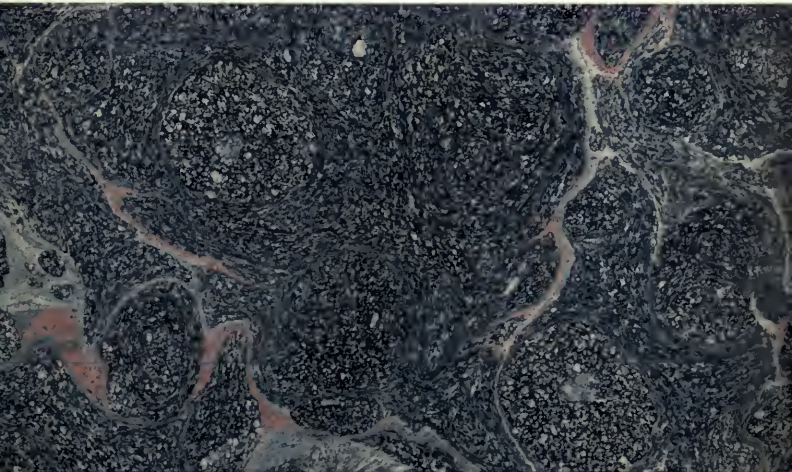


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